

LITTELL & GAY,
No. 30 Bromfield Street,
BOSTON.

THE SIXTH VOLUME
OF THE
POPULAR NATURAL HISTORY MAGAZINE,
THE AMERICAN NATURALIST,

Begins with the Number for January, 1872.

All the leading Naturalists in the country write for this monthly Magazine, and its pages are filled with reliable and interesting matter relating to all branches of Natural History, to which it is exclusively devoted. Every number has SIXTY-FOUR pages of reading matter, and many illustrations executed on wood or steel by the best artists and engravers

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PUBLISHED AT THE
PEABODY ACADEMY OF SCIENCE,
SALEM, MASS.

A. S. PACKARD, Jr., and F. W. PUTNAM,
Editors and Proprietors.

TO MICROSCOPISTS.

We beg to call the attention of all persons engaged in active work with the microscope, either as investigators or as makers, and of all who use the microscope as an aid in their instruction or as a pastime, to the *Department of Microscopy* in the *American Naturalist*.

The Editors of the *Naturalist* have heretofore devoted such space as was required to articles upon this subject; but they now propose, with the commencement of the new volume (January, 1872), to make this department a special feature of the magazine, under the editorship of Dr. R. H. WARD of Troy, who is so well known as a practical microscopist as to ensure its successful management.

It will be the aim of the Editor of this department to keep the readers of the journal informed in all that is taking place in microscopy, both in regard to the improvement of the microscope in all its parts, and in regard to microscopical research. To this end he solicits correspondence on all matters pertaining to the subject, and information from makers and observers relative to the work they are doing which they wish to make public for the benefit of science.

With a view to render this department a means of familiar interchange of ideas and wishes among microscopists, queries and suggestions in regard to subjects of general interest to microscopists will receive prompt attention and notice; and publicity will be given, as far as practicable, to the wants of microscopists in regard to obtaining materials, exchanging specimens, etc.

With this announcement the Editors trust that microscopists will give their aid to the magazine, by sending for publication, communications, notes, remarks, and proceedings of societies;—and by their subscriptions.

Communications and notes for this department may be sent directly to Dr. R. H. WARD, TROY, N. Y., or to the Editors of the *American Naturalist*, Salem, Mass.

A. S. PACKARD, Jr.,
F. W. PUTNAM,
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PEABODY ACADEMY OF SCIENCE,
SALEM, MASS., December, 1871.



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SALEM, MASS., December, 1871.

 The present number of *The Living Age* completes a volume.

The next number, beginning the new year and a new volume, will contain articles by an array of eminent authors, as follows : —

A PERSIAN PASSION PLAY. By *Matthew Arnold*.

THE NEAP REEF. Part II. By the author of "Dorothy Fox."

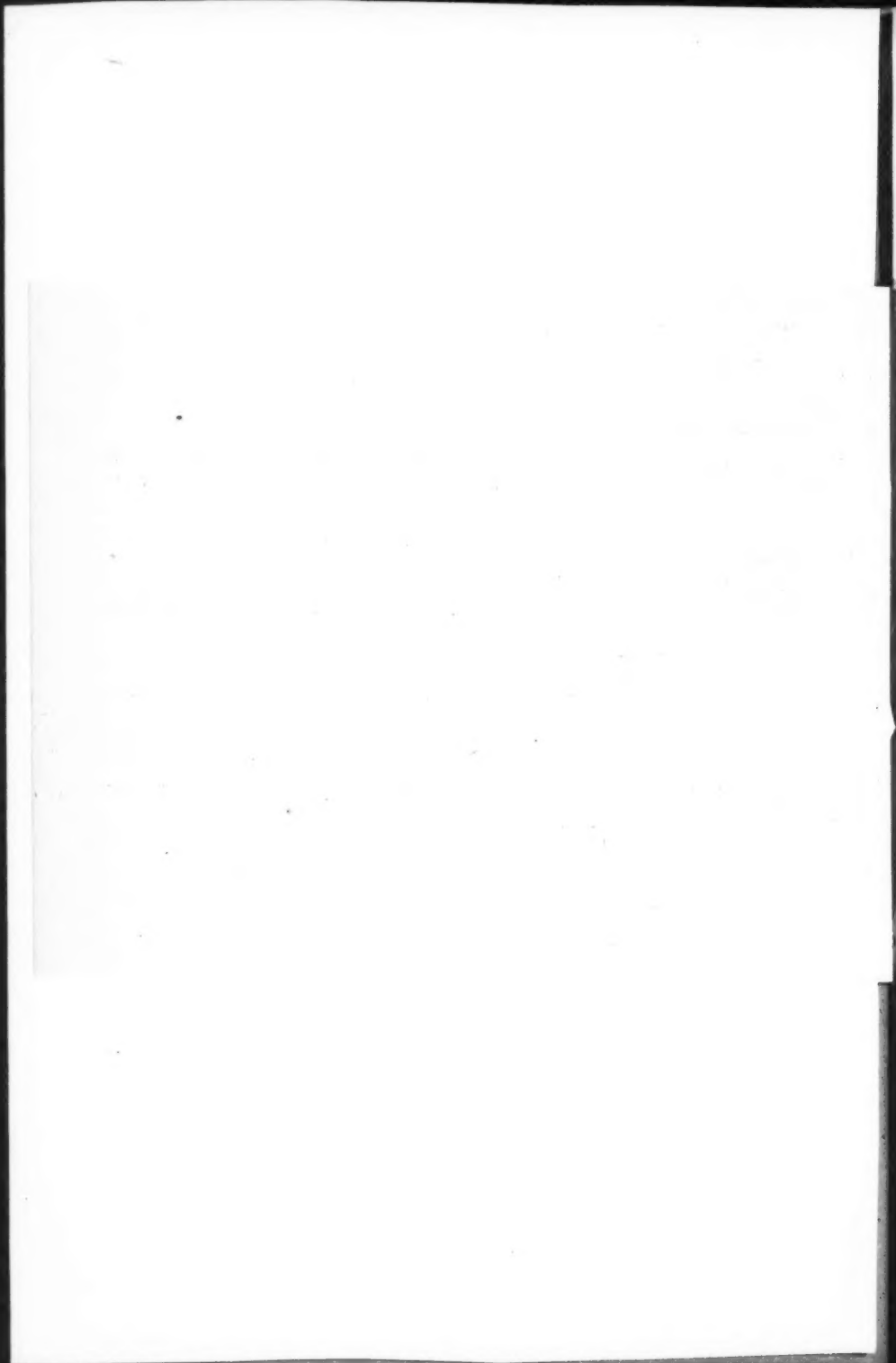
PHILOSOPHY OF MYTHOLOGY. By *Max Muller*.

STORY OF THE PLEBISCITE. Part I. By the distinguished French writers, *Erekmann-Chatrian*.

THE LAST TOURNAMENT. By *Tennyson*.

Besides shorter articles, poems, etc. The remarkable story, "The Maid of Sker," which has excited unusual attention in England, will be continued.

We invite the attention of such of our readers as have not yet renewed their subscriptions for 1872, to the above partial list of the contents of next week's numbers as an earnest of our efforts for the coming year.



LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

No. 1438.—December 30, 1871.

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NUMBERS OF THE LIVING AGE WANTED. The publishers are in want of Nos. 1179 and 1180 (dated respectively Jan. 5th and Jan. 12th, 1867) of THE LIVING AGE. To subscribers, or others, who will do us the favor to send us either or both of those numbers, we will return an equivalent, either in our publications or in cash, until our wants are supplied.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
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A SONG OF THE NATIVITY.

Unto us a Child is born;
 Unto us a Son is given;
 Child — the mark of human scorn;
 Son — the Heir of earth and heaven :
 Son of God; a human child;
 God with us, His wondrous name :
 Holy, harmless, undefiled;
 Yet ordained to death and shame!

O that by a worthy song
 We might echo back the strain,
 Erst that greeted, loud and long,
 Bethlehem's astonished plain!
 Might the manger-cried King
 With the shepherd watch behold,
 And with star-led sages bring
 Frankincense, and myrrh, and gold ?

Lo! the heathen rage in vain,
 And in troubled pride they say :
 " Let us break their bands in twain,
 Let us cast their cords away! "
 Hark! 'tis Ramah's bitter cry,
 Yet the Virgin clasps her son;
 And a thousand babes on high
 Have the life of bliss begun.

Yea, of bliss; but not to thee
 Was such ending, Babe Divine!
 Thou another death must see —
 Deeper sorrows shall be Thine.
 Thou, in words and works of peace,
 Must await the appointed hour;
 Wondrous words of truth and grace,
 Glorious works of love and power.

Great Redeemer, Thou hast died;
 Thou hast wrought the work sublime;
 And the words have echoed wide
 To the farthest bounds of time —
 " It is finished! " — finished long
 Is Thy great Redemption-plan;
 And we bless Thee in our song,
 Lord of angels, Son of Man!

Wonderful Thy name we call,
 Counsellor, to Thee we bow :
 Mighty God, the Lord of all,
 Father everlasting — Thou :
 Prince of Peace : — Thy steadfast throne
 Strong in judgment stands for aye :
 Every land Thy right shall own,
 All Thy sceptre shall obey.

Unto us a Child is born :
 Unto us a Son is given :
 Not a weeping child forlorn;
 Not a son with sorrow riven.
 God Himself shall give the sign;
 Not a babe in manger bed :
 Lo! a King on throne divine :
 Hark! a blast to wake the dead.

Saw ye not a gleaming light ?
 'Twas the Bright and Morning Star :
 Heard ye sounds athwart the night ?
 'Twas the Judge — His nearing car.

Yea, and far the night is spent;
 Soon shall break the eternal day;
 Light is with the darkness blent,
 And the shadows flee away.

Saviour! by Thy Spirit's beam
 On our spirits' darkness shine;
 Waken us from worldly dream;
 Make us glad with joy divine:
 Glad and strong: through shame and scorn
 Singing on our way to heaven: —
 Unto us a Child is born;
 Unto us a Son is given!

Sunday Magazine.

THE FINISHED YEAR.

ANOTHER year has flown! months, weeks, and
 days,

Each marked with mercy, stand recorded
 now;

While each vain promise, each forgotten vow,
 Conscience accusing to my face arrays,
 And tells of faithlessness in all my ways;

But these confessing, at the throne I bow,
 And sovereign grace lifts my dejected brow,
 And fills my mouth with canticles of praise.
 With daily thanks from strength to strength
 I go;

With grateful songs I crown the finished year;
 And when I end my pilgrim-path below,
 And in the city of my God appear,

With praise untiring shall my lips o'erflow,
 Unmarred by evil, and unchecked by fear.

Sunday at Home.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS 13TH CENTURY.

HOLLY.

HERE comes holly that is so great,
 To please all men is his intent.
 Alleluiah!

Whosoever against holly do cry,
 In a loop shall be hung full high.
 Allelujah!

Whosoever against holly do sing,
 He may weep and his hands wring.
 Allelujah!

IVY.

Ivy is soft and meek of speech,
 Against all bale she is bliss,
 Well is he that may her reach.

Ivy is green, with colours bright,
 Of all trees best she is,
 And that I prove will now be right.

Ivy beareth berries black;
 God grant us all His bliss,
 For then shall nothing lack.

From Fraser's Magazine.

EPICUREANISM, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY FRANCIS W. NEWMAN.

WITHOUT accumulated and transmitted thought Science has never arisen. To trim and hand down the lamp of Knowledge has long been a favourite motto. Our modern material sciences are new, and even the sciences of Space and Balanced Force are easily traceable to their sources; for we find no need of going higher than Euclid and Archimedes. But who shall trace Morals to their origin? Until moral principles are held in common by a whole community, political cohesion is scarcely possible: therefore any long continuance in political union insures the development of a moral system, and, if any portion of freedom is attained, leads to different schools of morality. It would not then be wonderful if, in the complete mental freedom enjoyed by old Greece, all that the moderns can think concerning morals had been anticipated; nor if, in consequence, we made no progress or discoveries in this line of thought. On a superficial view such is the fact. We have contrasts of opinion now, very similar to the contrasts observed among the old Greeks, of which the extremes were held by Epicureans and Stoics. Nevertheless, it is my persuasion that our modern controversies are less chaotic, and that argument between adversaries is by no means so hopeless as in antiquity it seems to have been. Each school has at least unlearned some of its errors, under the attacks of its opponents, and all hold in common that man *ought not* to live for his individual selfishness, but for the common good.

Greek efforts at scientific thought began from the material world, with all the presumptuousness of inexperienced youth. They undertook with light confidence to resolve the highest problems of Astronomy, Geology, and Cosmogony, while ignorant of the surface of our own globe and of the very elements of Chemistry—a science which had then no name. At the same time they were most rudely furnished with instruments for measuring and weighing, and had scarcely even an idea of their importance. In the midst of

the contradictory theories hence arising, which led Socrates to renounce all physical research, one man of genius, Democritus of Abdera, developed a doctrine of Atoms, founded on large conceptions of the universe, and on the universality of mechanical law. Pythagoras also maintained the sun to be the centre round which the earth and planets move: but neither of these great men rested on arguments convincing to the majority of their contemporaries; indeed, the arguments attributed to Pythagoras are moral and fanciful. On the other hand the moral system of Pythagoras was didactic, or rather dogmatic, being taught without reasons, like a religious or ceremonial law. In the celebrated *Ipse dixit*, Ipse meant "the master himself," Pythagoras. Morals, as a science, or as a system which aimed to be scientific, is not traced by us higher than Socrates. Thenceforth there were two parallel streams of Greek philosophy—the older that of Physical Speculation, the latter that of Morals derived from Socrates; and each ran in many channels.

In the retrospect, we see not how anything else could have occurred but enormous presumptuousness, enormous error, and enormous diversity of opinion. Alike in politics, in religion, in morals, terribly difficult is the transition from the puerile to the adult stage—from the state of bondage to that of freedom. In political and religious struggles convulsions often occur too violent to be composed by any mediator, or softened by moral principle; nay, morality itself, and whatever passes for science, are then apt to be embroiled in the general chaos. What of this kind may have happened in far-off Asia concerns us the less because it is hopeless to get any continuous record; but the very fact makes us more value our knowledge of Greek opinion, which we see spread out before us with real continuity. The human mind, aspiring to truth and freedom, asked the reason *why* in all these high spheres at once. *Why* is a king or a polity to be obeyed? *Why* is a religion to be believed, or the existence of any Gods? *Why* is a certain course of action called moral and good? *Why* are certain doctrines, in this or that art or system, held

to be true and proved? Also, when Socrates despaired altogether of Physics, and devoted his life to ground Morals more deeply, his method was that of interrogating everything, and pretending to know nothing. Who could then wonder if he established nothing? Of course he aimed to get rid of rubbish, and clear a good foundation for a new building. He really did preach and teach, alternately with his scepticism, very much of definite morals; yet, inevitably, men widely diverse one from another believed themselves his disciples, alike dogmatic Stoics and Academicians despairing of truth. All who were between these extremes were esteemed Socratic, and certainly had common principles and common cultivation. They could learn of one another, and esteem one another, as do the sects of a common religion. But the system of Epicurus, which arose in the break-up of Greek freedom and Greek patriotism, was in entire contrast to all Socratic ideas.

If we are to believe the Epicureans their master was indeed the divine teacher. The Roman poet Lucretius, a man of unquestioned genius, was not aware that Epicurus owed anything to those who preceded him. Familiar as are his panegyrics to every scholar, it may not be amiss here to present two eminent passages. In the opening of his poem, he says: "When human life was foully prostrate over the lands in open view, crushed under grievous Religion, who displayed her head from heaven, bending over mortals with horrible aspect; a man of the Greeks first dared to lift mortal eyes against her, and was first to withstand her; one whom neither the report of Gods, nor lightnings, nor heaven with its threatening murmurs, repressed, but so much the more excited the ardent valour of his soul; so that he was the first who longed to shatter the close barriers of Nature's portals. Therefore the vivid force of his soul overcame, and went forward far beyond the flaming walls of the World, and surveyed the entire of Immen- sity; whence he reports to us what *can* arise, what *can not*; and how possibilities are limited to everything. Wherefore, in turn, Religion is now trampled under foot, and us Victory lifts to heaven." Though

Epicurus is not here named, he is certainly intended. The poet opens his fifth book with a still grander eulogy: "Who is able from weighty heart to compose a song worthy of the majesty of our topic and of its discoveries? or who is so effective in diction, that he can pour forth praises due to the merits of Him who bequeathed to us such treasures, won and earned by his own bosom? No one will be able, as I think, who is sprung of mortal body. For if we must so speak, as the notorious majesty of the subject demands, he was a God, O illustrious Memmius—a God, who first entered that course of life, which now is called Wisdom, &c. &c."

It would seem that Lucretius learned his philosophy wholly from *within* the Epicurean school, and knew no more of the history of thought, than his teachers were pleased to tell him. But this idolatry of their master was shared by the whole sect. Pomponius Atticus, in many respects a learned man—indeed a multiplier of erudite books—according to Cicero (*De Fin.* v. 1, 3) says, that he cannot forget Epicurus, if he wished; for his intimate friends have Epicurus's effigy, not only in pictures, but on cups and rings. Pliny attests that this sect carried about with them likenesses of Epicurus, and set them up in their bedchambers. The mischief done by this idolatry to the progress of their philosophy is visible in Lucretius himself, who has no desire to improve on his master, but simply to inculcate his lessons, as if from a sacred book, which may not be taken from nor added to. To this probably the true key is found in the fact, that Lucretius is careless to learn any of the secrets of Nature, except in so far as they aid him to explode the popular belief in Gods. He will give contradictory explanations of the same fact; and though quite aware that one or other is certainly false, and therefore possibly both are false yet, believing that one or other still suffices to supersede the theory of Divine action, he is satisfied.

The opposite view taken of Epicurus by Cicero—and probably by all Socratics—is very curious. According to Cicero (*Fin.* 16) Epicurus took up the physics of Democritus only to spoil them: while his

moral system was borrowed from Aristippus of Cyrene. What is there, he asks (*De N. D.*), in the physics of Epicurus which does not come from Democritus? True; he changed a few matters. When he saw, that if atoms were carried downward by their own weight [in parallel lines], their motion would be certain and necessary — to avoid the idea of Necessity, he said that the atoms *deviate* a little! It would have been less disgraceful to confess himself ignorant. Elsewhere (*Fin.* 1, 6) Cicero adds another reason why "deviation at uncertain time and place" must be admitted in the atoms, viz. that otherwise they would move on without collision, and nothing could be created; and in both statements he is confirmed by Lucretius (2, 216, 290). Thus Epicurus surrendered entirely Democritus's main doctrine, that the atoms moved by Law. he made them out to be lawless, yet undertook to lay down concerning them, what are the limits of possibility.

Indeed Cicero, though highly latitudinarian in his belief, towards Epicurus alone shows unconcealed aversion and high contempt. He makes Cotta (the Academician sceptic) say to Velleius (the Epicurean) "You would rather give up your whole status in life than the authority which has sanctioned the doctrine of atoms: for you made up your mind to be an Epicurean, before you had learned the doctrine. Hence you had either to take in all these absurdities, or to lay down the name of the school which you had already embraced." . . . "These blunders, which Epicurus made while half asleep, are reproduced by you as by his dictation, while he, as we see in his writings, boasted that he had had no teacher; a thing which I should believe without his avowal, as easily as I believe the owner of an ill-built house, who boasts that he employed no architect." On every side of Epicurus Cicero found something to repel him. The moral system seemed to him base or silly, the logic absurd; the very style offended him by its negligence or want of form, though he will not allow that his taste affects his judgments of truth (*Fin.* 1, 5). Nevertheless, we might hesitate to receive Cicero's representations of Epicurus,

were they not so thoroughly borne out by Lucretius, where we can compare the two: a fact which makes Cicero's erudition and great perspicuity highly valuable to us. His intimate friendship with Pomponius Atticus, a veteran Epicurean, gave him great advantage. The two friends sat side by side listening to systematic courses of lectures from two celebrated Epicurean teachers; and in the result, Atticus, while lamenting that Cicero was not convinced, confessed that he understood them perfectly.

The very first step of Epicurean logic, was, to assume that the bodily senses are perfect, and are alone trustworthy, in the decision of truth. Lucretius carries this out to such a pitch of absurdity, as to insist, that a distant object (as a heavenly body) is no larger than it looks. A modern student, who has not read him, may be slow to believe the statement, and may think that it is our misconception; but it is quite beyond doubt: his phrases are unmistakable. He says (5,565): "The disk and heat of the sun can not be much greater or smaller than it seems to our senses: for . . . (So again, 5,575). And whether the moon illumines us with spurious light, or flings her own light from her proper body, in either case she is in no respect of larger form than the disk which we discern with our own eyes seems to be: for . . . Nevertheless, as we here see fires to twinkle irregularly, it may be admitted that a distant object possibly is a *very little* either greater or less than it appears. Nor need we wonder that so little a sun (*tantulus Sol*) is able to send us so great a light. Do you not see how widely a small fountain sometimes waters the meadows, &c." It is clear by this passage, that neither Lucretius nor Epicurus understood the first elements of geometrical optics — did not know that the visible size of a distant object is nothing but the *angle* which it subtends to the eye, and has no *linear* magnitude at all. Moreover, while he knew that the sun is vastly more distant than the moon, and ought to have inferred that it is prodigiously greater, he actually pronounces that the sun is a small body. To Democritus (says

Cicero) the sun appears to be vast; for he was a learned man and perfect in geometry: but to Epicurus the sun seemed to be perhaps two feet in diameter; for he insists that it is just as large as it looks, or at most slightly greater or less.

On reading, side by side with many and monstrous absurdities in Lucretius, many sagacious explanations—as of relative motion, of the ascent of flame, of the transmission of force, &c.—it is natural to suspect, that the good in his Physics comes from Democritus, and that the stupidity was added by Epicurus. It might have seemed incredible that a man could call himself a philosopher, and gravely propound as theories, that every evening the sun is extinguished, and a new sun created every morning; and similarly account for the changes of the moon: to say nothing of his greater absurdities concerning visions and dreams. But his doctrine of images was really that of Democritus. Still, we can scarcely give Epicurus credit for selecting that form of physics which came nearest to modern science, when we find him to care nothing for his physical philosophy, except as a tool to undermine the foundations of religion.

Cicero brings out this very strongly in the speech of Velleius the Epicurean, and Lucretius confirms him. The same tone of pompous assumption is ascribed to Velleius, which we read for ourselves in the poet. "Then Velleius, with the usual confidence of this school, fearing nothing so much as to seem to doubt about anything; as if he had just come down from a cabinet of the gods, says, 'Listen and learn, not of silly inventions, not of a Platonic artizan-god, not of Providence, that prophetic hag of the Stoics; nor of a World endowed with soul and senses—a round, glowing and rolling God. . . . Because you do not see how Nature could effect anything without some mind, you take refuge in a God. . . . Thus you have placed on our necks an Eternal Lord whom we are to fear day and night. For who would not fear a forecasting, inventive, observant, curious, and busy god, who thinks that everything is of concern to him?' The Epicurean here shows a positive hatred not of the vulgar mythology only, but of the very idea of the most spiritual God whom the highest philosophy can conceive. The same tone is struck in Lucretius also; as, when he complains (5, 87), that speculators ignorant of his physics betake themselves to old-fashioned religious notions, and bring in upon themselves *severe lords (dominos acres)*, whom the wretched fellows

suppose to be *omnipotent*." Enough of the Physics of Epicurus: what then of his Morals?

He praises virtue of every kind, especially moderation and contentment with a little. The wise man will keep his desires limited, will chase away those which are neither natural nor necessary. He disregards death; he fearlessly holds the truth concerning the immortal gods [that they are blessed in perfect inactivity, absorbed in self-enjoyment]; he does not hesitate to withdraw from life, when death will please him better. Thus armed, he lives in perpetual contentment and tranquillity, which is the highest pleasure. He avoids all perturbations, therefore also all vehement passions, as conducing to pain. If pain assails him, as from disease, he tries to balance it by some pleasure, as by the smell of flowers; or if flowers are not at hand, then by the remembrance and imagination of them. He cherishes, as pleasant, the memory of all past pleasure. He refuses public honours, as embroiling him in the strife of politics. He pities all bad men, as fools; but does not disturb his own equanimity by hating either them or their conduct. His own enjoyments are simple and cheap. His paradise is a garden, or even a field, if it have but trees and a stream of water—fine weather indeed is needed; then "at no great expense he has much corporeal delight." Not but that he esteems mental pleasure highly, provided that it be not bought by study too severe. To vie with others in intellect is folly; for it strains the mind. Geometry demanded too much effort to please Epicurus, whose speculations were luxuriously easy; indeed to test them laboriously was the last thing to which he or his school was inclined. Nevertheless, in a popular view his morality had little to distinguish it from that of Solon, the great Athenian lawgiver, except on its political side; and here, strange to say, it agreed remarkably with early Christianity. The Epicurean, as the Christian, saw how hopeless a task it was to establish political freedom and good government; and moreover, he considered that it was very laborious and thankless, involving many discomforts. Solon's precept to take decided part on one side of politics, did not at all commend itself to him: nevertheless, Solon's verses on virtuous contentment and cheap pleasure, in which is a couplet too gross for translation into English prose, entirely harmonize with the Epicurean spirit. Lucillus Asiaticus might call himself an Ep-

icurean, but he was not of the Orthodox type; he was a libel on his master; for his pleasures, however refined, were too expensive: yet the popular notion of Epicureanism has been propagated from wealthy and self-indulgent men.

Torquatus the Epicurean, in Cicero, admires and defends the stern virtues of his celebrated ancestors, of whom one, consul in the great Latin war, put his own son to death for fighting out of the ranks. A painful virtue, says Cicero. True, replies Torquatus; but it is not virtuous because painful; it is virtuous, although painful. The virtue consisted in its conducing to military discipline, hereby to victory, hereby to the safety of the Roman state, "in which he perceived that *his own* safety was contained." Thus until he has made out that his great ancestor was selfish Torquatus will not allow that he was virtuous. Aristotle indeed sets before us the same thought, but only as a paradox: "There are two kinds of self-lovers," says he; "bad men ought not to love themselves, and good men ought; for the good man assigns to himself what is noblest and best and gratifies his highest part, and thereby may justly be esteemed a self-lover, since, while, benefiting others, he benefits himself most." But this is the sentiment of a man who maintained virtue to be good in itself. Epicurus regarded virtue as desirable only for the pleasure which it brought with it; on which account he declared that unselfish virtue was impossible.

Another peculiarity of Epicurus lay in his interpreting mere absence of pain to be pleasure, while pain was a sort of negative quantity, to be subtracted in estimating the balance. He regarded himself as being master of fortune as truly as any Stoic: for, ordinarily, so long as foolish pleasures which entail pain are avoided, pleasure in a healthy frame far predominates over pain; and if ever the extreme case occurred that life was more painful than pleasant, the orthodox follower of Epicurus had in his own hands the prompt remedy; he had only "to migrate from life." What more could the wisest of Stoics do?

The greatest controversy turned on the meaning of the word Pleasure. Epicurus bestowed the word on "everything that gladdens us;" all other philosophers insisted on using separate words, such as delights, gladness, joy, concerning affections purely mental. No one doubts that virtue in general tends to impart and diffuse mental pleasure of some kind: but even if this were *universal*, it is certain that a good

man in exercising the virtue is not seeking for the resulting pleasure, or at all thinking of it, but accounts the virtue good in itself. A very despicable "sentimentalism" results, if any one try, for instance, to relieve poverty for the sake of the pleasure which he will have in the action. It is hardly credible that anyone in modern times will justify this; but most of us will say that Epicurus defended his case unskillfully, and that he ought to have dwelt on the fact that a virtue (if real) produced pleasure to *some one else*. Thus Torquatus, in beheading his son, may have got absolutely no advantage, no tranquillity, no pleasure for himself; but if his deed is to be justified, it must have brought much advantage, ultimately much pleasure, to Roman citizens.

If it be convenient to fix the name Pleasure on everything that gratifies us, whether intellectual, affectional, or corporeal, there may be no ground for objecting to it, any more than to say Gratification or Satisfaction, so long as the vagueness of the word is kept in mind. But when anyone goes on to imagine that he can combine all such pleasures into a single total, and mentally discuss its maximum, calling the maximum HAPPINESS, it is evident that he regards all such gratifications as *of the same kind*. Moreover, the moment this is conceded, and morals built upon it, no standard of morals, any more than of tastes, can be so rigid as to justify punishment. Contrast the taste of Aristotle with that of Epicurus. "It is right," says Aristotle, "to do many things for the sake of virtue or one's friends or one's country, even if it be requisite to die for them: for the good man will fling away property and honours, and in short all the good things for which men contend, while purchasing for himself nobleness. For he would rather be pleased intensely for a short time than moderately for a long time, and live nobly for one year than many years in chance-fashion, and do one action noble and great rather than many small actions. And perhaps this happens to those who die in a great cause, for they choose great nobleness for themselves." Evidently the character of men principally depends on their tastes, in this larger sense of the word; but there is nothing in the Epicurean doctrine to elevate taste and kindle noble passion—a task which is cardinal in Morals.

In the Platonic, Aristotelic, or Stoical school a true *passion for virtue* was often kindled. Plato, in his own characteristic way, says, "that if True Wisdom could be

revealed to men's bodily eyes, all men would fall in love with her." This is the critical matter in all that we have now learned to call *spiritual* morality. Why does the man who under Christian teaching is "convinced of sin," moan so profoundly and humble himself so deeply? why does he lash himself with extravagant invective, and account himself worthy (as many a one has said and will say) of everlasting punishment? It is because he has an unutterable contempt of his own evil conduct and low desires, and has glimpses of a better life which he ought to have pursued. And when raised out of despair into hope, the vehemence of his longing after a nobler state becomes a real power to help him forward, and to cut away all relations with his baser beginnings. Nothing of this is possible from an Epicurean foundation. One who supposes deeds to differ only in the more or less of pleasure, and all pleasures to be either the same in kind or at least co-ordinate in value, cannot sternly rebuke himself, cannot suffer deep inward shame, cannot pant and agonize for a nobler state: indeed, the more such a struggle is needed, the less is it possible. In trying to raise depraved men into better courses, the great difficulty notorious to us all is truly pointed out by Aristotle. Socrates, says he, was wholly wrong in thinking that bad men differ from good men in knowledge only, and that to remove ignorance is to create virtue. It is in desires and aims that good and bad men differ; the depraved man has wrong desires, and to bring them right needs training, not mere teaching; but with depraved adults we find no possibility of training: a fact which leads Aristotle to fall back on early education as alone of avail, for (says he) the depraved man has not the *first principles* (*οὐκ ἔχει τὰς ἀρχάς*) i.e. right desires. But, according to Epicurus, all men have the very same desires, namely, the desire of pleasure, which is the same in everything.

Substantially the same moral doctrines have been advanced in recent times by the justly celebrated Jeremy Bentham, a man whose eminence as a jurist and a keen-sighted scorner of political injustices has aided to give currency to his theory of morals. He propounded "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" as the goal to drive at, and the very statement is a disowning of selfishness—a vast improvement on Epicurus. Besides, however strongly we may insist that Virtue, not Happiness, is man's chief good, which every wise man chooses for himself, and

every wise mother would choose for the child she most loves, yet it is undeniable that to choose virtue for others is generally quite impracticable, indeed is an offensive pedantry. While we may reverently believe that the Supreme Mind designs the virtue of man as man's highest good, not the less must we confess that individual man has extremely limited power to promote the virtue of his brother-man. To abstain from whatever will hinder his virtue or tend to deprave him, is good negatively; positively there is little to do, but to promote his comfort, his powers, in short his happiness; and then we practically adopt Bentham's formula, which is not ill calculated for political use. Even so, how much better to say, that all citizens *ought* collectively and singly to promote the general *welfare*?" Who will deny this? But when the "greatest happiness" is proposed to us as a moral foundation, grave embarrassments arise. The greatest happiness? But what is happiness? No two men have the same idea of it, nor has the same man at different times. No doubt, we are told that happiness means *the total sum of pleasures minus pains*: an explanation which is of little avail for practical use. Is it indeed imagined that in selecting one course of action rather than another, we can enter into such computation? Take any ordinary occurrence of daily life. A gentleman's footman behaves saucily, and there is a question whether to dismiss him. By what high calculus is it to be approximately determined, whether the maximum of pleasures and minimum of pains will accrue to the human race or (say) to the English nation by overlooking or by punishing the fault?

It is impossible to pass by the name of Mr. John Stuart Mill in this connexion, though I regard his writings on this subject as chiefly an attempt to infuse a nobler morality into those whom he accounts as on his side. It is chiefly with his phraseology that I quarrel, as leading to evil; but, in substance, he seems to come very close to the school which he supposes opposite. Indeed, he is justly severe on Bentham for asserting that all pleasures are the same in kind; but the moment it is allowed that pleasures differ in kind, the idea of any *total* of pleasures which can be intelligently contemplated and measured mentally, must be abandoned. Mr. Mill justly adds, that pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. The question also enters, whether the pleasures thus heterogeneous are at all co-ordinate; whether they

do not lie in wholly different planes, so that a higher pleasure is paramount over any imaginable total of the lower; and whether a single pain may not annihilate an infinity of pleasure? Nay, the question instantly answers itself. The pain of having a vicious son cannot be balanced against minor pleasures. In ancient times it was asked, whether the pleasure which a cow has in rubbing herself against a stone was the same kind with the pleasure of discovering the solution of a mathematical problem. This may suggest to ask, whether the pleasure of friction with a bath towel, ever so often repeated, can be compared with the pleasure of repaying to a revered and honoured benefactor kindnesses and benefits, with great sacrifice to ourselves? Surely we do not overstrain universal sentiment, in saying that the nobler pleasure is here so pre-eminent that it eclipses and annihilates the lower; and if so, on the showing of Utilitarianism itself, right action is determined by the consideration of the higher pleasure only. And the case is not exceptional. It must be normal, whenever heterogeneous pleasures come into competition. Surely then we have a true grievance against those who insist on using this word *pleasure*, which is the popular name for the lowest kind, as descriptive of the highest kind. Mr. Mill's complaint of the stupidity of the public, who so often mistake what the word means, seems to me a confession how ill his phraseology is chosen. A like objection attaches to Mr. Mill's pertinacious use of the word happiness, as, "It that there is nothing desired [in virtue] results from the preceding considerations except happiness," after he has admitted that the pleasures which make up happiness (so called) are too diverse to be presented to the mind at all by the word. In fact, this sentence can only be understood to assert that "nothing is desired in virtue except *something or other* which people like." Surely such vague statements, whether he mean it or not—nay, however much he desire the contrary—must tend to degrade moral sentiment.

For the word utilitarianism he claims some personal credit. "The author of this essay," says he, in foot-note to p. 9, "has reason to believe himself to be the first person who brought the word utilitarianism into use." It is common in systems of ethics to insist that a thing is called useful when it is a means to a further end; and that the end is higher than the means.

Hence, to call a thing useful puts it below things which are desirable and desired

for their own sake. Mr. Mill admits that virtue is certainly desired for its own sake, but only just as money is, by the effect of habit; that it is an artificial desire needing a justification; and the justification is, that virtue tends (whether the aspirant to virtue knows it or not) to produce happiness in other people, more or few, if not in the person himself. Happiness is thus exalted into a primary and natural end. Virtue depressed into a secondary and artificial end; and this while happiness may mean nothing but the gratification of desires neither exalted nor exalting.

The following passage of Mr. Mill (p. 42, *Utilitarianism*) is highly satisfactory. He says: "The ultimate sanction therefore of all morality (external motives apart) being a *subjective feeling* in our own minds, I see nothing embarrassing to those whose standard is UTILITY, in the question, What is the sanction of that particular standard? We may answer, The same as of all other moral standards—the *conscientious feeling of mankind*." This goes far to remove all differences between us except those of phraseology. I cannot see what ground he leaves himself to find fault with intuitional morals; for the doctrine of Intuition does not throw away the appeal to experience or the arguments from tendencies. Intuition is concerned principally with establishing that *gradation* in the value of things desired, or in the dignity of motives, which Mr. Mill admits and contends for, which, also, he enforces by means of men's *inward* feelings. He uses the emphatic language, "It is BETTER to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; BETTER to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied" (p. 14). Thus to be satisfied (which is identical with Epicurean happiness) is not so good as to be a higher being, a nobler person. Mr. Mill's idea of happiness is not that of mere content: he evidently rises high above Epicurus. But when he is such, why will he torment us by that vague word happiness? and how can he imagine that Science can be founded upon it? If he merely mean that, "that cannot be virtue which tends to general misery," he can say this clearly and strongly, without setting up any particular system of morals.

Although James Martineau is not likely to have been overlooked by any disputants on this subject, it would certainly appear that few of them can have understood his very luminous statements. A man may do the same action from one set of motives or from another. He has an inward judgment as to the relative nobleness of the

motives. This inward judgment we call an intuition. If the individual is very singular, he may be singularly wrong: but if we discern that the judgment is shared by all the men whom on other grounds we most respect, we call it a human intuition, and think it deserves to be made an axiom. Sir James Mackintosh tells us that Bentham said, "There ought to be no such word as Ought;" and undoubtedly Bentham struggled to abolish it. Mr. Mill talks of men's "conscientious feelings!" but Bentham said, "Here is a man who tells me he disapproves, because he *has got a thing* which he calls a conscience." Accordingly, Macaulay with good reason said that Bentham could give no reason why a person *ought* to care for the general welfare, *ought not* to be selfish. But Mr. Mill has a reply, which Bentham could not use. His intuition (which he prefers to call his "subjective feeling") tells him, as mine tells me, that Disinterestedness is *BETTER* than Selfishness. I cannot but wonder why it is, that while he thinks no justification, nor any further analysis of the fact, is needed for loving a minor pleasure for its own sake, he makes such difficulty about loving a virtue for its own sake; and this, admitting the fact, that it is loved. It would seem that any meaner instinct is a born citizen of the utilitarian soil, and needs no passport; but if a nobler instinct venture thither undisguised, the police at once molest it; and it has to plead at the bar of the meaner to get a ticket of leave. Mr. Martineau's words on a kindred topic will here apply: "While this logic is permitted, in every battle of the Gods and Titans, the children of earth will vanquish the sons of heaven."

Pleasure is asserted to be good in itself, yet to esteem virtue good in itself is treated as a paradox by Utilitarians: and then they shriek with amazement, as injured and slandered persons, when told that under their doctrine the majority of mankind will gravitate into baser sentiment.

Paley, who almost agrees with Bentham when he attempts theory, has excellently said, that to have the habits well set is of primary importance to morals. Of not less importance is it, to have the noblest desires most cultivated, which is in fact an intensifying of intuition. The Utilitarian school (I do not include Mr. Mill) want to reduce intuition to its minimum: the Spiritual school want to exalt it to its maximum. The two schools perhaps do not at bottom disagree as to the

several elements of Morals; but they clearly differ much as to their relative importance; and out of this comes the difference in phraseology. If we wish to excite an enthusiasm, a passion for a nobler state, we must cultivate quick inward perceptions of what is *ignoble*. This certainly will never be done by exclusive talking about experience, by swamping the most diverse sets of feelings under the word pleasure, or by any preachings about happiness. The modern doctrines are better than those of Epicurus; yet they have a large smack of his opium.

Epicurus was highly temperate, and highly extolled universal temperance; yet it is notorious that his doctrine gravitated into the lusts of the flesh, in the largest sense of the word. In regard to what are called the pleasures of the table, Epicureans were not necessarily or perhaps often excessive; but however cautious of his health a man might be, yet to live for such enjoyments was morally fatal. Numbers of thoughtful persons are now seized with alarm at the symptoms displayed in all the great towns of Christendom; which a prophet would probably denounce as addicted to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Mr. Mill, we may well believe, groans under this, as much as any of us. If we can suggest the sources of the evil, and whence a remedy is to be looked for, he will not disdain it.

Epicureanism rises naturally, as soon as a State becomes corrupt, as, in the breakup of nationality. For the State is the moral heart of the nation, the most potent diffuser of good or evil. It cannot have organic life, until some common morality actuates men. It gives shape and body to that morality, and variously enforces its moral judgments on delinquents. It can reach family life and greatly modify men's habits, and thereby their minds: and according as the public institutions are good or bad, so does the nation become. A vicious nation is a certain index of vicious institutions.

In early times the State has generally taught *religion* with temporary benefit to political order; but if the religious doctrine be made authoritative, the State, in the course of centuries, upholds artificially the immature notions of barbarism. Again, in early times, questions of right are fought out between neighbour tribes, or between the orders of a community. Conquerors assume rights over *land*, which, if not very oppressive at the moment, become more and more oppressive as the nation lives on and multiplies. Out of this

oppression grows class-enmity, pilferings, dishonesty; with which family-pride keeps pace, and luxury too, if the higher class be enriched. Again, conquerors regard women as having no rights, and licentiousness spreads wide; and if standing armies arise, it is perpetuated in another way. Further, men, having legislation all to themselves, enact laws, especially marriage laws, unjust to the female sex, which, taking different form under different circumstances, under all yield a bitter crop. Expensive courts set the example of luxury and change of fashion, spreading and almost demanding habits of pecuniary extravagance; hence a general rush after wealth, and much unscrupulousness: for the saying goes abroad, that one who has not such or such an income is trodden under foot. Last, and not least, capitalists are permitted to deprave a nation for their private gain, while perhaps the State, instead of forbidding them, condescends to share their ill-gotten income. Who can deny that all these causes of demoralization conspire in England as much as in any nation on earth? Let all the moralists, all the philanthropists, all the ministers of religion, all the thoughtful heads of families unite their influence; yet they are helpless to stem the flood of immorality. It can only be done through the STATE; and the first necessity is to recall the fundamental idea of State action, that it must promote the WELFARE of the community, which primarily depends on its morality. We have collectively no higher interest. Though individuals can do so little for other men's virtue, the State can do an immensity; and much more can it immensely deprave the country. On both sides, therefore, it is upon and through the State that philanthropists have to act.

Mr. Mill well understands that we need to exalt the object of promoting the public good and depress (each of us) his own private cupidity. In other words, we need simpler, severer tastes; perhaps the frugality of Epicurus, who generally dined on herbs, and certainly laid great stress on being satisfied with a little. Some people, oddly calling themselves Economists, think it a great gain to infuse into a population artificial desires, and name it civilization. Where a powerful aristocracy has persecuted socially every politician who dares to discuss the rights of land, or where the ruling sex tries to crush all talk of the rights of women, Mr. Mill comes to the front on the side of the oppressed. Does he not thereby bid us hope that he will step out farther? We need his pro-

test more distinct for simplicity, and against corrupting trades. In regard also to sexual purity, it is to be feared that every approach to Epicurean doctrine is highly sinister. To shield the male temperament from vice, we need not only that the female sex shall have high defensive power, but that a reverence for them, with a stern sense of justice, should lie deep in men's hearts. It is said that, "a woman who hesitates is lost;" and why say less of a man? If a man once begins to compute (what is incomputable), the *pro-and-con* of a special vicious action which he allows himself calmly to contemplate, it is ten to one that low instinct and base passion will carry him away. Every young man eminently needs an *intuitional hatred* of allowing carnal desire to be dominant, or to be gratified for its own sake: yet novelists, poets, and artists pander to voluptuousness without being disgraced and shunned. A powerful passion can only be encountered by a higher passion; and undoubtedly the spiritual passions are the strongest. The moralist's task—whatever name he assume, to whatever school he refer himself—is to strengthen and purify the intuitions—the inward judgment, the inward desires: for these are the vital forces of action. Otherwise, only the despairing wail will be heard from those best taught in moral systems—"Video meliora proboque: Deteriora sequor."

From Good Cheer.

THE NEAP REEF.

BY MRS. PARR, AUTHOR OF "DOROTHY FOX."

CHAPTER I.

MANY years ago Redneap was a humble little village, unknown to tourists and pleasure-seekers, innocent of hotels and bathing establishments, not dreamed of by lodging-house-keepers or enterprising companies, and inhabited chiefly by seamen who traded between it and the French coast. Of the mariners who knew and dreaded the hidden dangers of the Neap Reef, few had ever seen the village which lay snugly sheltered behind the tall, bare rock, on which many a brave little bark had been dashed to pieces, for no light-house then marked the dangerous coast, and no friendly fog-bell warned the vessel off the fatal shoal.

The Redneap men were known to be good sailors; and their houses, substan-

tially and comfortably furnished, bore testimony to the industry and prudence of the owners. The cottages were rather straggling and widely parted. The better sort were built of stone, with a little patch of ground in front walled off from the road, and planted — after the fashion most favoured in Redneap — with a low tamarisk tree, surrounded by large shells, yellow marigolds, and grassy tufts of sea-pinks.

High up the Luton road stood one of the neatest specimens of these somewhat unpicturesque dwellings. It belonged to the widow Lee, whose tall, upright figure is just discernible, as this evening she sits, half turned from the window, at the little round table, reading out of the baize-covered family Bible, which, with a hymn-book and the "Pilgrim's Progress," constitutes her entire library. It is Mrs. Lee's rule — and by rule she orders her life — to read her Bible on Sundays, during periods of sickness and sorrow, or when any event of more than ordinary importance takes place in her life. The reason of her now betaking herself to this solace is, that she has just parted with her son Philip, who has left her for an unusually long cruise. Though Mrs. Lee avers that she sees the hand of Providence in Mr. Chenevix, the rector's nephew, wanting Philip's little craft, the *Bluebell*, for a pleasure trip, at the same time that the owners of the *Emily Jane* need a trustworthy seaman to bring home that vessel and its valuable freight of rare woods, still she cannot stifle a sigh, nor prevent her tears flowing, as she remembers how many a lonely hour must pass before her eyes shall again see her dear boy's face. Not that Naomi Lee, even to herself, acknowledged this weakness; and sharply would she have rebuked the slightest attempt at sympathy, saying, she was none of the sort that asked for mercies, and then murmured when her prayer was granted. No, she was thankful to say that, in sorrow or joy, she had always been able to make the Lord's ways her ways, knowing that the hand which chastised could raise, and that He who took could give.

And certainly every one in Redneap knew of, and most envied, Philip Lee's stroke of luck; for, between the two chances thus offered to him, he would be able to clear off the debt on the *Bluebell* — which would then be all his own — take freightage, run ventures for himself, and finally set up a house and marry a wife.

It was this last that rankled and lay

heavy at the mother's heart; for, shut her eyes as she would, she could neither be blind nor deaf to the fact, that Philip's choice had fallen upon the girl whom of all others she despised, disliked, and refused to contemplate as a daughter for herself or a wife for her son. That it was more than a passing fancy, "o' which Phil ought to be ashamed," she resolutely refused to admit; blaming the bold, enticing ways of the girl for her son's apparent attentions to her, and hoping, with pitying scorn, that the poor, vain creature would set no store on words that were as lightly meant as they were spoken. But, notwithstanding that her neighbours and gossips, while handling the subject with her, apparently concurred in this opinion, they decided, when safely out of the widow's hearing, that "'twas only for old Dutton's grand-daughter to hold up her finger, and, for all his mother might say, Phil Lee would follow her to the end of the world." And then they sighed and nodded their heads in pleasant anticipation of the thorns which were growing up to trouble their neighbour's flesh: for certainly Mrs. Lee was more feared than loved by the small community among whom she had spent her life — a life which, she proudly boasted, could be scanned and taken to pieces without finding in it speck or flaw.

It was close upon thirty years since Mrs. Lee had buried her husband; yet, by her own exertions, she had, during the whole of that time, maintained a respectable appearance, kept a comfortable home over her head, and brought up her boy to be, in her eyes, a pattern of what a son ought to be. No mother grieving over a prodigal, flighty, or headstrong child ever took her burden to Naomi Lee, who entirely lacked all pity for those who deviated from her own standard of propriety, and loudly denounced the weak love which many sins could not utterly destroy. In her heart she sympathized entirely with the indignation of that elder son for whom a fatted calf had never been killed, and, only that "'twas Scripture," would have doubted if the doting father did not live to repent that he had not left his prodigal to the swine and the husks, which his own folly had brought him to. Yet, in spite of this hardness, there was much good in Mrs. Lee. Let sickness, sorrow, or any of those troubles which she thought were "sent from above," visit a cottage, and there you would most surely find her with cool head and nimble hands putting all other helpers in the shade. The rector's

first question in a house of trouble was, "Where's Mrs. Lee?" and Dr. Starling from Luton often called her his "right-hand man." She never grudged her time or her pains, and had therefore a claim to the unquestioned respect in which she was held by all who knew her. For if a woman had Mrs. Lee's friendship, it bespoke her to be a thrifty housewife, doing her duty to her husband, and sending her children regularly and tidily to school and church. If a girl had Mrs. Lee's good word, she was at once stamped as being free from all flightiness and vanity, a good hand at her needle, and well versed in those habits of industry and cleanliness, by which alone, in Mrs. Lee's opinion, a man's comfort could be insured. Many a ribbon had been hastily hidden lest it should call forth the widow's reproof; many a brooch carefully covered to prevent the useless finery meeting her scrutinizing gaze.

"You're terrible hard on the maidens, mother," Philip would sometimes say; "I'll warrant now, when you were young, you liked a trinket as well as any of 'em?"

"Me, Phil!" his mother would reply indignantly; "young or old, I never put a gewgaw of any sort on me. My wedding ring, which is good guinea gold, is the only trinket I ever had or wanted."

"Ah, mother!" her son would say, with his low pleasant laugh, "there's not many o' your sort left now—leastways not in Redneap."

"When you are seeking for a wife to tread in my shoes, Phil, tell me, and I'll find you one they'll fit; but mind this, in wedded life, 'as you make your bed, so you must lie on it,' so don't choose first and ask advice afterwards."

And Philip, finding, in his own phrase, that the soundings were dangerous, edged off, afraid of entering upon troubled waters.

While Mrs. Lee "is trying to combat the desolate feeling" with which parting from her son has filled her, by reading portion after portion of the Book of Psalms, she has an inward solace, which in reality softens the separation far more effectually than the sweet words she repeats to herself half aloud in the vain endeavour to keep her thoughts from scheming and devising what will be the most certain plan of opening Philip's eyes to the ways of that artful girl who has caught his fancy. Absence, the mother argues, is for most people a sure cure, and "out o' sight, out o' mind" holds as good with men as with maidens. It will be

strange, therefore, if, between the parting and the host of indiscretions she is certain of being able to store up against her boy's luckless enchantress, a final separation be not effected.

"I'll keep my eye upon her," thinks the widow, "so that Phil shall know her in her true colours. Rather than I'd see her his wife I'd follow him to his grave," though at the very thought a lump rises in her throat, and she has hastily to apply her apron to her eyes before she can answer "Come in" to the tapping at the door, which is gently opened by a comely-looking girl of four or five and twenty.

"Oh, Annie! it that you?" said Mrs. Lee, feeling she could indulge in a greater show of regret than she should display before ordinary visitors.

"I hope you won't mind me coming, Mrs. Lee; I couldn't sit comfortable and think you were lonesome, so I've brought up my work; but if you'd rather not, you've only to say the word, you know."

"I take it very kind o' you, Annie," and Mrs. Lee motioned her to be seated; "for eight or nine months is a long time to look forward to, and we don't know what may happen—'our breath is only in our nostrils,' you know." Annie nodded her head lugubriously in assent to the widow's remark, and Mrs. Lee continued, "'Twould be a different thing, now, if Philip were comfortably settled with a wife, who'd look after his clothes and keep the place tidy; then, when my time was come, I should feel my labour was ended and my race run; but as it is, I can't help feeling anxious about him."

"Oh! but you mustn't think o' that. Philip would be in a way if he thought you felt at all moeey about him; he made Mrs. Davis, and Jane Grant, and me, and everybody, promise we'd look in upon you, and bear you company whenever you were likely to feel lonesome."

"Dear fellow!" ejaculated the widow, as soon as she could steady her voice. "Ah, Annie! though I his mother say it, she'll be a lucky girl who gets my Philip for a husband." Annie bent a little lower over her work. "There was never a tenderer heart than his, nor one more loving and thoughtful; and I can say, what few mothers can of a son nigh upon thirty, and a sea-faring man too, that Philip's never given me—of his own actions—one hour, no, not one minute's uneasiness."

"I'm sure o' that," answered Annie. "Father often says he's a pattern to the Redneap men, and if he had a son he

should love him to be just such another as Philip."

"Well!" said Mrs. Lee, looking pleasantly at the young girl, "and if I had a daughter to choose she would be one o' your pattern, Annie, for I will say that I couldn't lay my finger on a more industrious, tidy girl than yourself."

"Oh! I don't know, Mrs. Lee," and Annie gave a little sigh. "Sometimes I wonder whether men don't think most of those who are ready with their laugh and joke for every comer."

Mrs. Lee shook her head. "Not a bit of it," she said; "men will be men all the world over, and where they find they can take they'll give, but t'aint among such maidens that they look for wives, leastways not men like my Philip. I know all the idle talk there's been about his having a fancy for Margot Dutton; but do you think I set any store by such gossip? Not I. I know my boy, and I know his opinion o' most o' the Redneap maidens, and what he has said about Margot I am not going to repeat, any more than I'll tell what he's said o' others that I might name," and she nodded her head significantly toward Annie, whose heightening colour showed that she felt herself to have been the object of remarks which were anything but unfavourable. "When he comes back again," continued the widow, "I trust he will be able to offer any woman a comfortable home; and then we shall see who his eye's bin on all this time."

Annie got redder than ever, and stammered out something about it being so fortunate that young Mr. Chenevix should want the *Bluebell* just now.

"'Twas one o' those things that was to be," said Mrs. Lee: "an opening made by a higher hand than ours. I thought Mr. Vesey alluded very feelingly to it in his sermon last Sunday as was a week."

"Oh! he's a very kind-hearted man is Mr. Vesey," replied Annie; "but father says all the talk at Hagley is about Mr. Horan. John Simmons told him, that when he preaches there's not a dry eye in the whole chapel."

"Surely!" ejaculated the widow. "I reckon he's one o' the Horans, as his grandfather used to keep a drapery shop at Rickfield."

"So father said, and he's going to ask him over. 'Twould be a capital thing if he could get him to preach the anniversary sermon. Father's gone to Hagley to-day; so he'll find out all about him."

"Well, then, there's no call for you going home, so stay and have your tea with

me. I shall be glad o' your company, for I can't help thinking about Philip, and it's a pleasure to have anybody you can open your mouth to. I wanted to make him a cup 'fore he started, for he always says no brew's like mother's brew: but he couldn't stop, for Thomas Kent takes him round to Luton, and he wasn't sure as to the time he started."

"I thought five o'clock was Kent's time," said Annie; "'tis altered as the summer comes on, you know."

"There now!" exclaimed Mrs. Lee; "I'll be bound for it that never struck Phil. He was gone from here by two o'clock, and he went straight to Kent's."

"Did he?" and Annie looked amazed. "Why Lydia Gale said she met him by Turncross stile as she came up with her sedge."

"It couldn't have been my Philip," said the widow incredulously, although a stab at her heart seemed to catch her breath and prevent her uttering the words.

"It must have been him, for she bade him good-bye, and wished him good luck."

Mrs. Lee was silent. Could it be possible that Philip was going to see Margot? Willingly would she have thought otherwise, but what else could have taken him to Turncross? — a steep road leading only to the rugged descent, by which, in by-gone days, the free traders had reached the beach below, and which now brought you within a stone's throw of old Dutton's cottage. Naomi Lee's face grew stern, and her mouth tightened, as a fresh feeling of hatred sprang up within her towards the girl who could rob her of the last few hours she might have had with her son. She could have wept sorrowful tears to think that Philip should have left her, to spend his time with, and give his parting words to, any one but his mother; but towards Margot her thoughts were hard and bitter — nothing should be left undone to put a stop to this glamour cast over her boy. Margot should never set foot in her house; and though, wishing to appear indifferent in the presence of Annie, she managed to steady her voice, the cups and saucers rattled in her hand as she said unconcernedly: "He wanted, I reckon, to see how the wind was like to be; nothing else could 'a took him Turncross way."

CHAPTER II.

AND what was it that was taking Philip Lee with quick step and heavy heart down the rugged road, which he had chosen in order that he might escape ob-

servation? He had already bidden farewell to the inmates of the little cottage below — said all he had to say to old Dutton — extracted every promise from Margot that jealous love could ask or invent — and yet he could not go without seeing her once more. A foreboding of evil seemed to spread a cloud over him, and he heartily wished he had taken Margot's advice, and had been contented to labour at home a year longer rather than thus risk the breaking of their engagement by this voyage and necessary parting. For — oh, terrible blow to his mother! — Philip and Margot were actually betrothed: it was only known to themselves, and guessed at by the old grandfather; but they had exchanged vows of love and constancy, and there was an understanding that on Philip's return Margot was to be his wife. One of the principle reasons for this secrecy was the feeling of dislike which existed between Mrs. Lee and Margot; for the girl did not disguise the fact that she found it impossible to love Philip's mother. "Yes, I daresay she is very good," she would say in reply to some defence from Philip, "but oh! she is so stiff and cold; and there is something in the way she speaks which brings shame to my face and tears to my eyes. I would that your mother should be my mother, Philip, but I fear greatly she will never love poor me."

Margot was the orphan grandchild of old Dutton, a man who in his day had been one of the boldest sailors in Redneap. He and his son were joint proprietors of a small smack which traded to Honfleur for fruit and eggs. In this way young Dutton became acquainted with his French wife; whom he soon left a widow, for the *Nancy*, of Redneap, went down one stormy night in sight of Notre Dame de Grâce, while trying to make Honfleur harbour. Old Dutton managed to save himself. No doubt, his brave son might have done so also, had not the piteous cries of the little ship-boy made him turn back, and in the endeavour to rescue him they both sank to rise no more. So Margot came into the world fatherless; and though, as years rolled on, many a stout fisherman offered in name to fill that place to the little dark-eyed maiden, who, first on her mother's back and afterwards toddling by her side, seemed to have a claim upon them all, Madame Dutton refused to have any successor to the English husband she had loved so passionately, and struggled on bravely and successfully to maintain herself and her child. By

making nets, collecting eggs from the surrounding villages and outlying farms, and selling bouillon to the sailors, she contrived to gain a scanty, but respectable, livelihood. All her neighbours had a good word for the kindly, warm-hearted woman, and, though they could do little else, cheered her by their sympathy and helped her with their outspoken approval.

With the best heart in the world poor old Dutton could not give his daughter-in-law much assistance. He was never able to replace the *Nancy*, and afterwards sailed as mate instead of master. Added to this, rheumatism settled in his legs, and for weeks together the old man would be disabled and utterly useless for anything but looking after the boats of the Redneap men, and doing any little repairs to them which might be necessary. As the disease gradually increased, this became his principle occupation, and, that he might be on the spot and handy to his work, he turned the remains of a wrecked vessel into a sort of dwelling-place. To this, as time went on, he added a shed or so, then he set about converting the odd bits of wood into tables, chairs, and various other articles of furniture, until the old fellow grew so proud of Shingle Cottage, as he named it, that he would not have exchanged it for any in the village, where he could not have smelt the sea by day, nor have been lulled to sleep by its roar at night.

Except by the perilous path at the back, Shingle Cove was often unapproachable; and a popular belief existed, that some day the inhabitants of Redneap would awake to find that during a gale poor old Dutton and his quaint abode had been washed out to sea together. But, unshaken by such forebodings, the hardy, fearless sailor lived contented and happy, delighted, when, by hard work and by stinting himself of everything but the bare necessities of life, he could send some little token of remembrance to his "poor Charlie's little un." These somewhat incongruous presents he generally intrusted to his prime favourite, Philip Lee, who, first in the *Ocean's Pride*, and afterwards in the *Bluebell*, was engaged in the same trade as Dutton and his son had been. Out of regard for his friend, and respect for Madame Dutton, Philip always took her stock of eggs, and made sundry ventures of melons for her, and during his stay at Honfleur lodged and boarded at her house. Thus Margot became early familiarized with Philip, who endeared himself to the child, not only by being the

bearer of her grandfather's presents, but by always adding some trifle on his own account. Long before he had thought such an event likely, he would jokingly call Margot his little wife; and Madame Dutton, with a further insight into probabilities, felt only too happy to think that perhaps her child might have so trustworthy a protector, to whose care, she saw, she might confidently confide her.

Poor mother! she did not live long enough to see any further foundation given to her hopes; for she was struck down by a fever, which after a few days' illness proved fatal; and at the age of fifteen Margot was left alone in the world, with no claim upon any one save some French cousins on her mother's side, whom she had never seen, and her old English grandfather, who by Philip Lee sent the tenderest offers of love and welcome that his honest heart could suggest.

Hard as it was to leave her native land and the early friends who spoke her mother tongue, Margot preferred going to Redneap to living in an inland town hedged in by houses, where she could never look upon the sea, which seemed necessary to her existence; so carrying her few household treasures, with Philip Lee, and in his boat, the girl reached her new home, and was greeted with outstretched arms by her rough old grandfather. But his was a roughness which she understood, and, with a happy capacity for adapting herself and her surroundings to her wants, she was soon contented and merry; turning the rude furniture to the best advantage, setting out the few articles she had brought with her, and making (to use her grandfather's words) "the place seem as if the sun was ever shining in it." Philip was naturally the most welcome guest, and as the years went by, and the slim, pale girl grew into a handsome young woman, whose rich color and dark eyes made many a heart beat with emotion, what wonder was it that the intimacy slowly but surely ripened into love?—a love so strong and deep, that the thought of now being months without hearing her sweet voice and seeing her loved face made Philip Lee's heart die within him, and caused Margot's tears to fall thick and fast as she sat on her low stool within the cottage door, gazing with the "inward eye of memory" on the stolen meetings, the long leave-takings, the hundred sweet pleasures which for so many months they must forego.

At the sound of a low whistle she started up, and in another moment Philip was by

her side, telling her that he could not leave without seeing her once more; while she lovingly chid him for allowing such a cause to bring him back all that way again.

"Besides which, I have been thinking," said Philip, "would it not be better, perhaps, for me to write a letter to mother as soon as I am off, and tell her about ourselves, and that you're my promised wife?"

"Ah, no!" cried the girl, putting her fingers into her ears, as if in anticipation of the torrent of reproach such an announcement would call down upon her.

"I don't know but t'would be the right line to pursue," said Philip dubiously. "I wish now that we'd spoken up about it at once. I never had a secret in my life before, and I don't seem to like having this."

"Oh, Philip!" said the girl pleadingly, "I could not bear that your mother should be told and you absent. No, no; let things alone until the time when you shall come safely back, and then——" and she hid her blushing face on his shoulder.

Naomi Lee only spoke the truth when she said, that the girl who got Philip for a husband would be a lucky one. He was a fine, stalwart fellow, with a nature as open and frank as his merry face bespoke; and, notwithstanding his great strong limbs and tanned skin, telling of toil and exposure to sun and wind, he was as tender and lovingly jealous as any girl. Margot believed there could not be another such in all the world; and, though she teased and tormented him by a hundred coquetish tricks, her whole life was bound up in him. She never tired of talking about him, and many an hour passed quickly away, as old Dutton repeated his oft-told recollections of Philip's boyhood.

The old man had seen him enter the cottage, but discreetly kept out of the way, and left the lovers to themselves; until, beginning to fear Phil was running it too sharp, and that he had best give him the signal to be off, he approached, singing in an unusually loud, gruff voice, producing a tremendous effect by seeming to stumble over unseen objects, and then making diligent search for the cause of his tripping. Upon entering, he expressed his unbounded astonishment at seeing Philip again, though he gave it as his opinion that it was high time he took his leave.

"Ay, ay," said Philip; "and sure enough," he added, consulting a comfortably-sized watch nearly related to a warming pan, "I've no time to spare."

Old Dutton took the hint, and hobbled off.

Philip again urged the expediency of writing to his mother; and then, crowding into the last few moments despair at leaving, entreaties that Margot would always love him, prayers for her safety, promises of constancy, he summoned up all his resolution, and, without a word to old Dutton, or a look at the sobbing girl, who had flung herself down on the settle at the door, Philip Lee hastened back to the place he was to start from, leaving her grandfather to administer to Margot all the comfort he could think of.

"Cheer up, my flower," said the old man presently, "or Phil'll be back before you get your bright eyes dry. Why, bless ye, child, I call his a pleasure trip, not a voyage."

"Ah, yes! but it is the feeling I have at my heart, as if we should never meet again." And Margot's tears began to flow faster than ever.

"Now never you pay heed to nothing o' that sort," said he, giving a significant shake of his head; "for I s'pose I never parted with my poor Sally, as was your grandmother, but I felt about as miserable as a gibcat, barring the last time, when I went off as gay as a recruiting sergeant. And how was it when I got home agen? Why, she was lying in the churchyard, cut off in a week by her leg, poor soul. Ah! her end was for all the world like

'Betsy Bowden

Who would ha' lived longer, but her cowl'den.
Not she's age;

(for your grandmother was only fifty-two)

'nor she's decay:

(there warn't a spryer woman in all Redneap)

'But she's bad leg car'd she away.'

And so it was; for if it hadn't bin for that, why she'd be livin' now, and here to comfort and cheer you up, lovey, ever so much better than an old feller like me can." And he gently stroked Margot's glossy hair with his horny hand.

"That I'm sure she nor nobody else could," said the girl, trying to rouse herself; "and I am not going to cry any more, grandfather, but think of the time when Philip shall have come back to us. Oh! all I ask in the world is to have you two with me always, and then —"

"A fig for Madame Uppercrust," said the old man, interpreting Margot's shrug, and jerking his head towards the village,

to signify that his allusion was meant for Mrs. Lee.

"I wish she was not so disagreeable," said Margot dolefully. "Philip loves her very much, because she is his mother; but as for me, how can I love her when she is always saying rude, cross things to me, and scolding me for doing this and going here or there, and telling me I must leave off my French ways? My French ways are as good as her English ways, and," added the girl, firing up indignantly, "my own mother taught them to me, and I will never leave them off to please Mrs. Lee or anybody."

CHAPTER III.

AND now about these French ways. What were they, and what was there about Margot so completely to raise Mrs. Lee's hatred and disgust? The girl was good-tempered, merry, and kind-hearted. No one could breathe a word against her; and the worst that the most ill-natured person could say was, that she was too free in her manner. In Redneap, after the house-work was done, the women sat at home busy with their needles, while the men gathered in knots about the beach, laughing and joking with each other, and discussing any topic that might be interesting to them. From such groups Margot had never been accustomed to absent herself. At Honfleur, after the toil of the day was over, Madame Dutton and the other women took their work, and joining the men entered into their mirth, gave their opinions, and freely handled all subjects publicly advanced. Their tongues flew as fast as their fingers; and when darkness stole over them, some one would sing a song, and the rest joining in chorus, they would stroll home together, and separate with cheerful hearts and kindly adieux.

Naturally, Margot saw no reason why she should alter the habit which was familiar to her. Most of the beach idlers were her friends, and she found them all ready to laugh and gossip with the pretty French girl, whose light-hearted vivacity and piquant sayings contrasted somewhat favourably with the stolid bearing, and the stories of domestic incidents and difficulties which formed the staple of the conversation of the well-trained women of Redneap. Margot very much preferred the men to the women; for she had heard her mother say, that in England women were afraid to open their mouths, and were so stiff and distant that they froze you; and certainly she had found them so. Ah, yes! if it were not for the sea, and the

beach, and Philip, Redneap would be a dull place indeed—no merry-makings, no fête days such as she recalled when, with her mother and their neighbours, she went to some gay dance; or if it were summertime, walked to one of the village orchards, and under the spreading trees, sipped cider or *orgeat*, the men smoking while she—on account of her singing being thought, for a young girl, wonderful—trolled out, without any bashfulness, “*Le Beau Galant*,” “*Les Compagnons de la Marjolaine*,” or any other country song popular among them. But how her mother’s face would beam with pleasure when Pierre Berthal, Auguste Réno! Père Gaultier, or any of the good judges, declared that in Paris her voice would make her fortune! Ah! it was not of much use to her now, except to amuse her old grandfather, and get him away from Craft’s when he was inclined to take a glass more than was good for him. Philip did not care for singing, and always looked fidgety and weary if she volunteered, or was asked for a song when there were more listeners than himself and her grandfather.

To tell the truth, Philip would have willingly seen Margot conform more entirely to the ways of the other women of the place; not on his own account—for in *his* eyes she was perfect—but naturally he wanted his mother to think well of her, and apparently, as long as she lacked a certain amount of demureness, and did not take kindly to needlework and chapel-teas, Mrs. Lee utterly refused to have anything to say to her.

“I haven’t given her up without a trial, Philip,” the widow would retort, “so you can’t throw up that agen me. When first she came here I took her by the hand, and would have taught her what ’tis proper, in my opinion, a respectable young woman should know; but she seemed to think she had no need of telling, and I was always met with ‘Mother liked me to do this,’ or, ‘her way was that,’ so, of course, I said no more.”

“Well! ’tis but natural she should set store by her mother’s ways,” Philip would answer. “She was a good, kind-hearted woman, was Madame Dutton, and a religious woman too.”

“Ah!” Mrs. Lee would reply, with a contemptuous snort, “*religious*! I don’t think much o’ such a religion as hers; but la! she would add complacently, “what can ye expect of folks whose talk is gibberish, and their virtuals frogs and snails!”

Philip would laugh at his mother’s prejudice against everything relating to the place and people to whom Margot, in spite of her English father, seemed so entirely to belong. Still, in his heart, he could not help being vexed; and the next time he and Margot met he would ask her reproachfully why, for his sake, she did not try and get on better with his mother? And, because the girl’s delicacy prevented her telling him her real opinion of Mrs. Lee, Philip would sorrowfully interpret her silence into a sullen feeling against the one person it was her duty, as his affianced wife, to try to love.

Mrs. Lee had no positive intention of conveying her instructions to Margot in an offensive manner; neither had she the slightest notion how much she irritated the girl by her openly-expressed contempt of everything foreign, and her scantily-disguised doubt that any woman, save an English one—“and not many o’ them neither”—could teach a girl aught worth knowing. This slur upon her mother’s teaching roused all Margot’s spirit, and it usually happened that Mrs. Lee and she parted with a more settled dislike of one another than had existed when they met. Of course, Philip proved the worst possible mediator, always taking up the cudgels for the one who was absent; and, in his anxiety to reconcile them, insisting when talking with Margot, that the fault lay principally with her, and, when talking with his mother, that the prejudice was wholly on her part.

Mrs. Lee was not the only enemy poor Margot had in Redneap, where very few of the women took cordially to a girl who engrossed such an undue amount of attention and admiration from the men of the place. Accordingly, a war of words often waged about the unconscious Margot, who had no idea how her actions were censured, or how bravely her champions battled to prove that “her ways” were only the result of light heartedness; and that she was quite as particular and correct in her behaviour as the prim moralists who could see no good in cheerfulness, and no merit in being contented with a lot in life which most young girls would have bemoaned as dull and hard. To use her grandfather’s words, the inmates of Shingle Cottage knew many a banyan day for with all his industry the old man could earn but little; and, much of the work he managed to accomplish must have remained undone, had not Margot lent her young strength to aid the poor limbs, which grew stiffer and stiffer every winter. Then the mending and

making of the nets all fell to the girl's share. Her grandfather would often boast, that in or about a boat she was as handy as any man living; although even he little knew how much of the labour accredited to himself had been the work of the girl, whom Mrs. Lee and her fellow-matrons called "an idle gadder, always to be seen giggling and gostering among a parcel o' men, without a bit o' bonnet on her head, and her brass eardrops jangling and tinkling like a merry-andrer's." For in dress, assign conduct, Margot managed to give great offence to the village. Love of her country, and perhaps a little tinge of vain consciousness that no other costume would be so becoming, made Margot refuse to adopt the prevailing fashions of Redneap. All in vain was it for each and every one of the mentors to attack her on this point; she staunchly maintained that no other kind of dress could be so useful, comfortable, and economical.

"Ah! well, suppose that she did not wear a bonnet, she wore a cap instead."

"But," as the village conclave unanimously declared, "a cap's a cap, and a bonnet's a bonnet; and, therefore, wearing o' one has nothing to do with leaving off o' the other. 'Tis both unbecoming and indecent for a young girl to want to make herself partikler, not to say anything of her setting up her opinion against them as was old enough to be her mother."

"I suppose the gentry like it," said Annie Turle, who was present during one of the sharpest of these discussions. "For young Mr. Chenevix was at our house speaking with father about his tackle, when Margot happened to pass, and he said he wished all the village-girls wore the dress she did. As I told him, 'twould be a poor job for me if I had to be one o' them."

"And I'm glad that you did, Annie," replied Mrs. Lee; "'twas sickening to see the airs that girl gave herself at the last rectory treat, all along o' young Mr. Chenevix and Mr. Arthur a taking such notice of her."

"I should be very sorry," put in Mrs. Curtis, "to see a child o' mine a-going on so with gentlefolks."

Mrs. Lee concurred in this assertion at the time, though she afterwards remarked, "there was no fear of their doing so; for, of all the saffern-face maidens I ever saw, Mary Jane Curtis beats 'em; and why her mother is so blind to it as to dress her out in that rory-tory gown is more than I can tell. Why, when she entered the room, the ladies was quite in a titter; as well they might be, to witness such an object

as Mary Jane looked. Not," added the widow, "that I hold by one in Mr. Chenevix's station making free with a girl in Margot's walk o' life."

"I suppose it's her pretty face makes her so sought after," said Annie, to whom these confidences were being imparted. "It's a wonderful thing to have good looks," she added in a dolesome tone.

"Well, Annie you've no cause to complain, I'm sure; if you're not what you may call handsome, you've a fresh colour and a good wholesome skin o' your own, and I don't know what a girl wants more than that."

Poor Annie thought *she* wanted a good deal more. She wanted Margot's bright eyes and glossy hair, and every feature which charmed away Philip's love from her.

Philip and Annie had been brought up together from children; they were nearly of one age, and had called each other sweethearts at a period when that had meant an exchange of valentines, and a bag of fairing from Luton. Annie was a quiet undemonstrative girl, possessed of all the qualities to make a man's home happy; and, if there had been no Margot, doubtless Philip would have found but little difficulty in returning the love which Annie strove vainly to withhold from him. With a different bringing up, the girl would have been much more attractive than she was; but, from always living among and associating with elderly people, she seemed to have become one of them, and entirely lacked the charm of youthfulness, which in Margot was so captivating. Mr. Turle's maxim, and the one which he had striven to instil into his daughter's mind, was, "Do what you can for others without hurting yourself;" and though Annie did not strictly regard the injunction, its influence robbed her of all impulse, and prevented the generosity of action to which her unbiassed nature would have often prompted her. Owing to Mrs. Lee's liking for her, she was regarded in the village as a pattern of propriety and industry; and, accordingly, had to pay for this distinction by being covertly disliked by the very mothers who held her up as an example to their daughters, who, in turn, declared to each other that she was a regular old maid, and they "wouldn't be like her for anything."

Annie painfully and instinctively felt her unpopularity; she saw elbows nudged as she drew near, for the conversation to be changed; she knew that she was accused of repeating to Mrs. Lee and the

minister any small impropriety needing correction and reproof; and there was little doubt but that the girls she would have willingly chatted with, were usually more pleased to see her back than her face. Margot little knew, and her detractors would never have believed, how prim little Annie often sat, watching her rival's ready laugh and coquettish graces, feeling she would give all she possessed, or was likely to possess, if she could so answer Philip, and with like pretty coyness accept or refuse his eager attentions. She had plenty to say to Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Davis, or the minister's wife; but let Philip come in, or set her down with young people of her own age, and her powers of conversation utterly failed her, for the reason that they and she seemed to have nothing in common. Poor Annie! none knew how dearly she paid for the proprieties, with which the zeal of her several partisans had hedged her in. For her life, she dared not have worn a smart bow or gay ribbon — was it not the boast of her friends that you never saw Annie Turle in such finery? Though her heart was often inclined to join in some of the few merry-makings at Redneap or its surrounding villages, such an idea could not be entertained for an instant. So while, of these two girls who engrossed the lion's share of village gossip, Margot suffered from always doing wrong, Annie underwent quite as much torment from never doing anything but what was right, and was as weary of praise as Margot was indifferent to blame. Annie thought, that if she could but secure Philip, she would certainly throw off this bondage of good opinion, and dress smartly, and go to the acting and singing at Luton Fair, or anything else Philip liked to take her to. She wouldn't then be led by Mrs. Lee or Mrs. Anybody-else; and if they did not like it, well she should be independent, and, as long as she pleased Philip, she should not care. Margot on the other hand, often told herself that when she became Philip's wife, she would try and do all she could to make his mother like her; and if going to Luton Fair or Hagley revels vexed her, why she would stay away. Should she not have Philip? — and to please him, ah! she could give up anything. She hated those ugly big bonnets and drab-coloured gowns; but what mattered it if, by wearing them, Philip loved her the more for trying to please his mother?

CHAPTER IV.

To do Mrs. Lee justice, it was not entirely the prospect of the girl's fortune

which made her select Annie Turle as her future daughter-in-law. No — she liked her; she considered her to be possessed of good sense, industry, and steadiness; and, altogether, regarded her as the best counterpart of herself to be found in the village. Surely this was the highest guarantee a son so devoted as Phillip Lee should have needed; and the widow, who had been accustomed during all her boy's lifetime to rule and decide for him, did not feel inclined to give up the reins when he was making the most important choice of his life. Men, she argued, were always contrary to their mothers about sweet-hearting, and she did believe it was nothing but that which made Philip so kinky about Annie Turle. Anyways, she knew what was best for him, and nobody would thank her more than he would if she could manage to bring the two together. What a thing it would be for Philip to slip into old Turle's shoes right off! for any man who took Annie would be certain to have the business, and when he looked round, and felt himself master of the building yard, and able to stay at home and be comfortable, heart alive! what a ninny he would think he was to have spent his time in dangling after that "fly-by-night" Margot, a girl as far beneath him as any one in Redneap! It was all very fine to talk of what they had been, but all the world knew that now old Dutton and his granddaughter too were glad enough to turn their hands to anything. Why, no longer than a week ago, she met Margot going down the village with a bundle at her back, for all the world like a tramp or a packman. Then there was the making of them shell-boxes and nets — it wasn't work for a woman. How had she done? She had been left alone, with nobody to turn to for a cup of cold water even, and two mouths to fill the same as theirs were; but nobody could say she ever lowered herself — she took in plain work and dress-making, and many a long night had she stitched away that she should look and do as others did. Yes, thank God! she had kept herself and her son, so that they could hold up their heads before anybody in the place, and she wasn't going to be dragged down now by folks with whom they had neither kith nor kin. The Turles were a respectable family, and Annie was a girl than whom, had she picked the world over, she couldn't have found one nicer or better thought of; and when added to this there was a comfortably furnished home and a tidy bit of money, why what more could any sensible man ask for?

These thoughts occupied Mrs. Lee's mind as she took out her warm gown and comfortable cloak, and arrayed herself preparatory to setting off for the Turles' house; where, in accordance with an invitation from Annie, she was going to drink tea in company with Miss Bateson, an aunt from whom Annie had considerable expectations. This lady was very well off, single, and had for the last five-and-twenty years suffered from some mysterious complaint, which she proudly boasted "was more than any o' the doctors could make out."

The winter had set in cold and stormy, and the cheerful fire blazing in the Turles' room made the house look to the widow more than usually cheerful; the other guests had arrived before her, and, the greetings over, the party were soon seated before a very elaborate tea, which drew down many commendations of praise on Annie, both as a cook and housekeeper.

"Folks often laugh at me," said the widow, "and doubt that I am over partial about Annie, but, as I say, show me her ditto in Redneap, and I'll hold my tongue."

"That's very true, Mrs. Lee," responded Aunt Maria, "for, I'm sorry to say, many o' the gals is so flighty and empty-headed as makes you wonder at their parents for not bringing them up different. I hear you had young Mr. Horan here on Sunday, Annie," she continued, turning to her niece. "How do you like him out o' the pulpit?"

"Very much indeed," answered Annie. "Father is uncommonly taken with him, and got him to promise to come over to the tea next month."

"Well, I'm sure! I was told as he walked to chapel and back with you." And Aunt Maria gave Annie a very significant look and nod.

"La! aunt, how ever can ye?" said Annie, blushing scarlet at the insinuation conveyed in the sly movement. "Anybody feels as if they could always make more free with the minister; don't they, Mrs. Lee?"

"Well, so it is supposed," answered the widow dubiously; "but human nature is but human nature still, and I have a thought, that for a preacher of the Gospel, Mr. Horan is full free with the maidens."

"Oh! la, nonsense!" exclaimed Aunt Maria. "Why shouldn't he take notice of any nice gal he thinks might prove suitable to him? for, after all's said and done, a single life is a terrible lonesome one."

"Well, you only say the truth, Miss Bateson, and by reason of it, nobody's

more anxious than me to see my Philip settled with a nice comfortable wife; but these young folks nowadays have so many pros and cons, and are so partickler."

"Oh! there was they as was ekally partickler when I was a gal," interrupted Aunt Maria, drawing herself up. "For though I've never got married myself, I don't suppose I need for to say the reason wasn't because I was never asked by nobody."

"Why no, aunt, we've all heard tell about your lovers," said Annie, laughing, "but nobody ever heard o' mine."

"Now hold your tongue, Annie," and the widow shook her head reprovingly. "My mouth's closed, you know, or I might say a good deal more than I do."

Annie's colour came, and her aunt divining the cause, said, "How's Philip, Mrs. Lee? He's a great favourite o' mine, you know, which is saying a good deal, for there isn't many o' the Redneapers I should care to see hanging up their hats in this house."

"I'm sure, Miss Bateson, 'tis very kind o' you to speak in that way, and so I take it," replied Mrs. Lee with a delighted face. "It's very gratifying to a mother to hear her son well spoken of, not that too much can be said o' my boy, than whom better never stepped in shoe-leather; and you've heard that he's gone to Ameriky on a very nice trip too, and one, I trust, that will turn out so as to make him independent. He's been gone—why, how long is it, Annie? Ah, surely! over three months; and when he comes back," she added, nodding significantly to Aunt Maria, "why then we shall see what we shall see; but, mind, nothing that will surprise me at all, nor you neither I expect, for folks as keep their mouths shut ha' most times got their eyes open, and in that respect, as in many others, I'm pleased to see Annie's her mother's child all over."

This delicate tribute to her family made Miss Bateson more gracious than before, and, to poor Annie's great confusion, she said, "Why or wherefore I can't say, but somehow I have always looked upon Philip and Annie as cut out for one another; and by that token I never paid no heed to the talk that went on about old Dutton's grand-daughter, and now I hear she's took up with that lazy good-for-nothing Dick Barry."

"Dick Barry!" ejaculated Mrs. Lee, breathless with astonishment and delight. "You don't mean to tell me so? Why, Miss Bateson, where ever did ye hear that? Well, I never did! Now, Annie, haven't I

allays said that girl 'ud come to no good end?"

Annie couldn't help her heart giving a bound of delight at any event which would rid her of so dangerous a rival; still she said, "Oh! aunt, are ye sure o' what you're saying? I can't fancy any girl giving her company to such as Barry, his name is so up in the village for a bad one."

"Tut, tut, nonsense," exclaimed Mrs. Lee quickly. "There's niver a pot so ugly but 'twill find a kiver to fit it, and, as I've said hundreds o' times, only give Madam Parleyvoo rope enough, and you'll pretty soon see the stuff she's made of."

"I can't abide no furriners myself," said Aunt Maria, "and so I was saying to Jane Triggs, for 'twas she was a-telling me all about it, and how she met 'em walking together—he a-carryin' her bundle—at the top o' Stoat's Lane. I hardly know what she didn't say now, for Jane's a rare hand for picking up the gossip, and she don't mind telling me anything, for none can say I ever fetch or carry."

"Surely!" said the widow, answering her own thoughts rather than Miss Bateson. "Well, Philip will be struck o' a heap to hear about Barry, for if there's one in Redneap he's set agin it's Barry."

"But there mayn't be anything in it," said Annie doubtfully. "I should make more sure before I took it for certain, if I was in your place, Mrs. Lee."

But Mrs. Lee had no intention of sifting a report the truth of which, she said, she was quite convinced of; and though she determined to go and see Jane Triggs, it was only with the hope of being able to obtain more damning evidence to pour into her son's ear, and so shake his faith and destroy the glamour he took for love. All she could think of was how wonderfully Providence was working in her favour, for had she ordered things herself she could not have hit upon anything more effectual.

Dick Barry was Philip's particular aversion; so much so, indeed, that Mrs. Lee had often been at a loss to account for her son's openly expressed dislike towards him. Notwithstanding that he was a wild, harum-scarum fellow, head and chief in all mischief, and scape-goat for most offences, he enjoyed with many people a certain amount of popularity on account of his really kind heart and readiness to oblige. He was said to be nobody's enemy but his own, and many declared it was a thousand pities such a clever chap hadn't some one to take him in hand, for you couldn't name the thing to which Barry couldn't turn, if he set his mind to do it. But Philip,

generally ready with an excuse for the most daring offender, made no excuse for Barry, and for the reason that in his heart he was jealous of him. He knew that his jealousy was groundless, but ever after he — by the quick intuition of love — had discovered that by a word or look from Margot the village scapegrace could be led at her pleasure, Philip was annoyed to see her show Barry a sign of pity, or hear from her a word in his favour or defence. Many a little tiff had the lovers already had on this account; and though Philip afterwards blamed himself for unreasonableness and nonsensical jealousy, he could not entirely banish the feeling from his mind. Thus his mother had gained possession of a dart whose power to wound she little dreamed of; and, as she sat making up her mind to barb the point, by adding each remark the gossip-loving neighbours were sure to make, it required quite an effort to keep up a due amount of interest in the small tittle-tattle which Aunt Maria continued to dispense.

"I suppose you've heard that Craft's going to put up a headstone to his wife?" she said.

"Now, you don't tell me so?" replied the widow. "Well, I'm sure if all's true as is spoken o' her, the less they say on it the better. I for one don't hold with lies being told o' the dead any more than o' the living."

"Tuesday as was a week would ha' bin her birthday," continued Miss Bateson; "and last Sunday there was a regular crowd round the grave, coming out o' church, to see the wreath made o' them foreign yaller flowers — Philip brought some home to you once, Annie — which Margot had put there."

"Ah! I've heard Philip tell how they place in their churchyards crowns and wreaths and such-like, made o' flowers and beads," said Mrs. Lee. "It seems to me a awful mockery o' religion," she added, with pious horror.

"Margot must have lost a good friend in Mrs. Craft," said Annie. "I've been told that she wanted to take her altogether, and do for her as if she'd bin her own daughter, only Margot wouldn't leave her grandfather. I'm sure," she continued, with a nod of her head to impress her wonder more forcibly, "if it had bin me, I'd ha' gone there or anywhere to get away from that dreadful place they live in. Why, 'tis fit to give a person the horrors to hear the wind howling and the sea dashing in there in winter times."

"And no decent, respectable girl would

hide there," responded Mrs. Lee; "but so long as she can have her say, and be 'hail fellow well met' with a passel o' idle quay-loungers, what does she care?"

"I wonder, I'm sure then, that she didn't go to Craft's," put in Aunt Maria, "for 'tis a complete rendezvous I'm told for all the rantipoles o' the place."

"Never fear but there was a somethink behind that we don't know of," said Mrs. Lee. "Not leave her grandfather! Tine a by! Why the both o' them are never away from the place."

"I don't fancy Margot went there much before Mrs. Craft took to her bed," said Annie, who could not help feeling that the widow was allowing her dislike to carry her a little too far; "but now that the poor thing's taken, I hope she'll give over going nigh the house altogether, for act as you may, it does get a girl spoken about."

"Oh, la!" exclaimed Mrs. Lee, "she can't be talked of more than she is already; I de-lara, what with one thing and another, I'm sick o' hearing her name. I wish she'd go back to the outlandish country she came from, and not be disturbing respectable folk's minds with her goings on and her heathenish ways."

From Saint Pauls.

VOLTAIRE ON HAMLET.

"Two little English books inform us," says Jérôme Carre, alias M. de Voltaire, "that this nation, famous for so many excellent works and so many famous enterprises, is possessed of two excellent tragic poets: one is Shakespeare, who is said greatly to surpass Corneille; the other the tender Otway, much superior to the tender Racine."

STRANGE as it may appear, this was actually news to France in the eighteenth century, for Voltaire was almost the only Frenchman of his day who had studied Shakespeare. In 1762, when he sent his translation of *Julius Cæsar* to the academy (a play he much admired in spite of what he called its barbarous irregularities) D'Alembert wrote to him "The academy trusts to you for the faithfulness of the translation, not having besides the original before them:" so that at a time when amidst the conflicts of the period England was acknowledged as the point to which the eyes of sages and philosophers were to be directed, a model for institutions, laws, and morals, her language was considered a barbarous one, and German hardly less so; France having arrogated to herself the sole supremacy in matters of taste over all other nations, whose only chance of liter-

ary glory was to imitate her — herself the imitatrix of the ancients!

"Taste will never pass into Germany" the King of Prussia wrote to Voltaire in 1775, "unless by the study of the classics, Greek and Roman, as well as French!" and a few years later he recommended the Duc de Montmorency not to learn German, "for," said he, "it is not worth your pains, seeing we have no good authors." The reason of so blind and ignorant a prejudice was this: those who had passed their lives in the company of the Greek tragedians would not admit of the slightest infringement of the monotonous and frigid rules which appeared to them to have been laid down by Eschylus and by Euripides, although there is probably not a single play of theirs in which the three unities, beyond which it was decreed that there could be no salvation, were really observed. With nearly one hundred private theatres in Paris alone, their *Britannicus*, *Phædre*, *Athalie*, sufficed to bound their ideas of dramatic excellence; and although the bulk of the people might not have been so fastidious, and may even in the provinces have condescended to patronize melodrama, Louis XIVth, in his gallery at Versailles, and those who came after him, were quite satisfied with their own classic drama, and would have been astonished could they have anticipated that the verdict of time would be, that the true heirs of the Greeks were neither Racine nor Voltaire — but Shakespeare — but Schiller — but even more modern and more romantic writers! Some faint suspicion of this, some latent doubt of the lasting nature of rules so narrow and so severe, pierces however occasionally through Voltaire's more stringent criticisms. In his preface to the *Orphelin de la Chine* he says, "were the French not so very French, my Chinese would have been more Chinese, and Gengis still more a Tartar; but I had to impoverish my ideas and to hamper myself in the costume, in order to avoid shocking a frivolous nation, which laughs sillily and thinks it should laugh heartily at all that is not in keeping with its own manners, or rather with its own fashions."

Fondly as he clung to the full dressed and formal beauty of the tragedies of his time, in which a nice observance of social punctilio was to be followed in the height of passion, and like Cæsar after his death-blow, every victim was to writhe in his agony with due decorum, he could not help admitting that there were some inconsistencies which prevented the acting from

being truly tragic. The arrangements of the stage, the paltry inadequacy of the scenery, and the ridiculous magnificence of the dresses, could not fail to strike a lover of art as drawbacks to the true realization of the scenes to be represented.

"Our playhouses," he admits, "when compared with the Greek and Roman theatres, are what our markets, our Place de Grève, our small village wells, are to the aqueducts and fountains of Agrippa, the Forum Trajani, the Coliseum, and the Capitol. Mountebanks hire a tennis court that they may have *Cinna* acted on a temporary stage. What can be done on a score of planks crowded with spectators?"

In 1740 the Emperor Augustus would appear on the stage covered with a square wig reaching to his waist stuck over with laurel leaves, and topped with a big hat over which again nodded a double range of red feathers.

A king, whether a Nicomedes or an Attila, was to be seen invariably in white gloves with gold fringes, the seams of his clothes laced over, and glass diamonds on his sword. Jocasta and Agrippina wore wide hoops and powdered hair, and attitudes and gestures were made to correspond to these masquerade habiliments.

Mademoiselle Clairon was the first actress to throw off the yoke of settled custom. She appeared all at once at the Versailles Theatre in the character of Roxana, without a hoop, her arms half uncovered, and in true Oriental costume. Her success was undoubted, although people did not know what to make of it; but the revolution just then did not go much beyond outward forms. The public showed a disposition to rebel against the most innocent innovations, and Voltaire himself, although a more natural and less monotonous declamation moved him even to tears in the representation of his own "*Electre*," remained immovable in his attachment to the old rules.

Once in the wrong, he was one of those men who would plunge into error as deeply as possible, and would never quit a false or dangerous idea till he had exhausted it. "Never," says one of his biographers, "had a man more constantly the air of not only being in the right, but of being incapable of being in the wrong;" and yet without even going into his grossest errors, how many of his reasonings do we find inaccurate and incomplete! how many facts seen only from one point of view!

He spent his time in arguing for excep-

tions against the rule, — for abuses against use, — for evil against good! We find wit and good sense often meeting in him, but if an option has to be made, he does not hesitate. We ever find him witty rather than accurate, piquant rather than wise.

It was in this mood that he undertook his criticism, or rather his burlesque of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

He would perhaps have preferred finding his countrymen a little less ignorant on the subject, for to attack a man who is defended by nobody is, to say the best of it, hardly exciting, and we therefore find him waging for some years with the great English dramatist a somewhat underhand and indecisive warfare. He pronounces him ignoble, ridiculous, barbarous, but adds "Although Italians, French, and literary men of all countries take him for the merry Andrew of a fair, you find in him pieces that elevate the imagination and pierce the heart. It is truth, it is nature herself speaking her own language without any admixture of art. It is the sublime, yet the author has not sought for it; in fact there is one thing more extraordinary than all, and that is that Shakespeare is a genius!"

When, however, Letourneur published his translation of Shakespeare accompanied with exaggerated praises, and much softened down besides, where a literal rendering would have grated on French ears, Voltaire, alarmed at the spirit of innovation which he foresaw was about to take formidable proportions, took up the cudgels in more sober earnest, and, although he was then in his eighty-third year, the academy received a long letter from him, a formal act against the English drama, in which he wrote, — "I am ever amazed that a nation which has produced men of genius, taste, and even of delicacy, should still affect to be vain of this abominable Shakespeare!"

It was resolved that this letter should be read at a public and solemn meeting. It passed off very triumphantly for the author, D'Alembert writing to him that the English who were present went away much chop fallen! but violent as was the onslaught, it was wild and impartial compared with his summary of the tragedy of *Hamlet*, which he offers to all readers from Petersburg to Naples as a fair specimen of the excellent tragic poet who is supposed to surpass Corneille, — "the mountebank who has some happy strokes and who makes contortions."

The little essay, which the author evidently intends to be taken as a model of

enlightened and unprejudiced criticism, begins with the remark that it is impossible to hinder a whole nation from liking a poet of its own better than one of another country, and that although there is not a man of learning in Russia, in Italy, in Germany, in Spain, in Switzerland, or in Holland who is not acquainted with *Cinna* and *Phædra*, very few of them have any knowledge of the works of Shakespeare, and that this is a great prejudice in favour of the former; however, he candidly remarks, it is but a prejudice.

"The papers relative to the suit," he says, "should be produced before the bar. *Hamlet* is one of the most admirable pieces of Shakespeare, as well as one of those which are oftenest represented. We shall faithfully lay it before the judges."

PLAN OF THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET.

"The subject of *Hamlet Prince of Denmark* is pretty nearly the same with that of *Electra*. Hamlet, King of Denmark, was poisoned by his brother Claudius and his Queen Gertrude, who poured poison into his ear whilst he was asleep. Claudius succeeded the deceased, and a few days after the burying, the widow married the brother-in-law. Nobody had ever entertained the least suspicion of the late King Hamlet's being poisoned in the manner above related. Claudius reigns in peace.

"Two soldiers being upon guard before the gate of Claudius's palace, one says to the other, 'How has your hour passed?' the other answers 'Very well, I have not heard a mouse stir.' After some discourse of the same nature, the Ghost appears, dressed like the late King Hamlet; one of the soldiers says to his comrade, 'Speak to the Ghost, you are a scholar.' 'That I will,' says the other. 'Stay and speak, Phantom, I command you.' The apparition disappears without answering. The two soldiers, in astonishment, talk of it. The learned soldier remembers that he had heard that the same thing had happened at the time of the death of Cæsar; tombs were opened, the dead in their shrouds screamed and leaped about in the streets of Rome; it, without doubt, is the presage of some extraordinary event!

"At these words, the Ghost appears a second time; then one of the guards cries out, 'Phantom, what would you have? what can I do for you? is your coming occasioned by any hidden treasures?'

"Then the cock crows. The Ghost walks off slowly. The sentinels propose striking it with a halberd in order to stop

it, but it flies, and the soldiers conclude that it is customary with ghosts to vanish at the crowing of the cock. 'For,' say they, 'at the time of Advent Christmas Eve, the bird of dawning sings all night, and then spirits dare not wander any longer; the nights are wholesome, the planets shed no bad influence, fairies and sorcerers are without power at so holy and blessed a season.'

"Observe by-the-bye, that this is one of the striking passages that Pope has marked with commas in his edition of Shakespeare, to make readers take notice of its excellence.

"After the Ghost has made his appearance, King Claudius, Gertrude his Queen, and the courtiers join in a conversation in the hall of the palace. Young Hamlet, son of the poisoned monarch, the hero of the piece, receives with sadness and melancholy the marks of friendship shown him by Claudius and Gertrude: this Prince was far from suspecting that his father had been poisoned by them, but he was highly displeased that his mother had so soon married the brother of her first husband.

"Gertrude dissuades her son from continuing to wear mourning for his father to no purpose. 'It is not,' says he, 'my coat as black as ink, nor the appearance of grief, which constitute the real mourning; this mourning is at the bottom of the heart, the rest is only vain parade.' He declares that he has an inclination to quit Denmark and go to school at Wittenburg. 'Dear Hamlet,' says the Queen, 'do not go to school at Wittenburg, stay with us!' Hamlet answers that he will endeavour to obey her. Claudius is charmed at the answer, and orders that all of his court should go and drink, whilst the cannons were fired off, though gunpowder was not invented."

Hamlet's soliloquy which follows is then paraphrased in the same spirit of veracious criticism. "Pope," he remarks here, "again gives notice to his readers that this passage is worthy of their admiration."

The *précis* of the story is continued in a literal translation of the advice which Laertes gives his sister upon the subject of the Prince's love for her and by a similarly faithful transcript of the Ghost's address to Hamlet, when they return to the stage "quite familiar with each other."

"The King and Queen," he goes on, "talk a long time of the madness of the Prince. Ambassadors from Norway arrive at court and hear this accident. The good man Polonius, who is an old dotard, much more crazy than Hamlet,

assures the King that he will take care of this disordered person. 'Tis my duty,' says he; 'for what is duty? 'Tis duty—just as day is day, and night night, and time time; therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, and loquacity the body, I will be brief. Your noble son is mad; for what is madness but being mad? In fine, Madame, he is mad. This is fact; it is a great pity; it is a great pity it should be true; the only business now is to find the cause of the effect. Now the cause is that I have a daughter!" To prove that it was love which had deprived the Prince of his senses, he reads to the King and Queen the letters that Hamlet had written to Ophelia. Whilst thus the King and Queen and all the court talk of the melancholy condition of the Prince, he arrives in great disorder, and by his discourse confirms the opinion that had been conceived of his madness; he, however, sometimes makes answers that discover a soul deeply wounded, and which are replete with good sense.

"The Chamberlains, who have orders to amuse him, propose to him to hear a company of comedians, who were just arrived; Hamlet talks very rationally of plays. The players act a scene before him; he gives his opinion of it with great good sense. Afterwards, when he is alone, he declares that he is not so mad as he appears to be. He forms a resolution to avail himself of the above-mentioned players, and directs them to play a pantomime, in which one is to sleep and another to pour poison into his ear. It is very certain that if King Claudius is guilty, he will be greatly surprised when he sees the pantomime; he will then turn pale, his guilt will be seen upon his face; Hamlet will be sure of the crime, and will have a right to avenge. Thus said thus done.

"The company comes and represents the scene in dumb show before the King the Queen, and the whole court, and the dumb show is, succeeded by a scene in verse.

"The King and Queen look upon these two scenes as highly impertinent. They suspect Hamlet of having played them a trick, and of not being quite so great a madman as he appeared; this idea gave them great perplexity: they trembled with fear of having been detected. What course could they take? King Claudius resolves to send Hamlet to England, upon pretext of curing his madness, and writes to his good friend the King of England, to desire it as a favour of him that he would

hang the young traveller on the receipt of his letter. But the Queen is desirous of questioning and sounding Hamlet before his departure; and for fear he should do some mischief in his madness, the old chamberlain, Polonius, hides himself behind a tapestry hanging, in order to come to the Queen's assistance if there should be occasion.

"The Prince, who was mad, or pretended to be so, comes to confer with his mother Gertrude; in this way he sees in a corner King Claudius, who was seized with a fit of remorse; he is afraid of being damned for having poisoned his brother, married his widow, and usurped the crown. He kneels down and makes a short prayer—not worth repeating. Hamlet at first has an inclination to take that time in order to kill him; but reflecting that Claudius is in a state of grace, he takes care not to kill him in such circumstances.

"This likewise is a passage which Pope's commas direct us to admire. Hamlet then, having deferred the murder of Claudius in order to damn him, comes to confer with his mother; and notwithstanding his madness, overwhelms her with such bitter reproaches of her crime as to pierce her to the very heart. The old chamberlain Polonius, is apprehensive of his carrying matters too far; he cries out for help behind the hanging. Hamlet takes it for granted that it was the King who had hidden himself there, to listen to their conversation. 'Ah, mother!' cries he, 'there is a great rat behind the hangings.' He thereupon draws his sword, runs to the rat, and kills the good man Polonius.

"The good Lord Chamberlain was an old fool, and is represented as such, as has already been seen. His daughter, Ophelia, who no doubt resembled him in this respect, becomes raving mad when she is informed of her father's death; she runs upon the stage with flowers and straw upon her head, sings ballads, and then goes and drowns herself. Thus there are three mad people in the play—Ophelia, the Chamberlain, and Hamlet, without reckoning the other buffoons who play their parts.

"The corpse of Ophelia is taken out of the river, and her funeral is prepared. In the meantime King Claudius had made the Prince embark for England. Hamlet, whilst upon his passage, had conceived a suspicion that he had been sent to London with some treacherous design: he finds in the pocket of one of the chamberlains, his conductor, the letter of King

Claudius to his friend the King of England to despatch him the moment of his arrival. What does he do? He happened, luckily, to have the great seal of his father in his purse; he throws the letter into the sea, and writes another, which he signs with the name of Claudius, and requests the King of England to hang the bearer upon their arrival; then he folds up the whole packet, and seals it with the seal of the kingdom. This done, he finds a pretext for returning to court. The first thing he sees is two grave-diggers digging Ophelia's grave. These two labourers are also buffoons in the tragedy; they discuss the question whether Ophelia should be buried in consecrated ground after having drowned herself, and they conclude that she should be buried in Christian burial, because she was a young lady of quality. Then they maintain that labourers are the most ancient gentlemen upon earth, because they are of the same trade with Adam. 'But was Adam a gentleman?' says one of the grave-diggers. 'Yes,' answers the other, for he was the first that ever bore arms.' 'What, did he bear arms?' says the grave-digger. 'Without doubt,' says the other. 'Can a man till the ground without spades and pickaxes? He therefore bore arms; he was a gentleman.'

"In the midst of these fine harangues and the songs sung by these gentlemen in the parish church of the palace, arrives Prince Hamlet with one of his friends, and they contemplate the skulls found by the grave-diggers. At last the skull of the King's jester is found, and it is concluded that there is not any difference between the brain of Cæsar or Alexander and that of this jester. In fine, the grave is made whilst they thus dispute and sing. Holy water is brought by the priests; the body of Ophelia is brought on the stage. The King and Queen follow the bier; Laertes, in mourning accompanies the corpse, and when it is laid in the ground, frantic with grief, he leaps into the grave. Hamlet, who remembers he had once loved Ophelia, leaps in likewise. Laertes, enraged at seeing in the same grave with him the person who had killed the chamberlain Polonius (taking him for a rat), flies in his face; they wrestle in the grave, and the King causes them to be parted, in order to preserve decency in the funeral ceremonies. In the meantime, King Claudius perceives that it is absolutely necessary to despatch such a dangerous madman as Prince Hamlet, and since that young prince had not been hanged in London, it

is thought highly proper that he should be despatched in Denmark.

"The artful Claudius has recourse to the following stratagem. He was used to poisoning. 'Hark ye,' says he to young Laertes, 'Prince Hamlet has killed your father, my great chamberlain. That you may have it in your power to revenge yourself, I shall propose to you a little piece of chivalry; I will lay a wager with you that in twelve passes you will not hit Hamlet three times. You shall fence with him before the whole court. You shall have a sharp foil, the point of which I have dipped in poison exceedingly subtle. If you, unluckily, should not be able to hit the Prince, I will take care to have a bottle of poisoned wine ready for him upon the table. People that fence must drink. Hamlet will drink, and one way or other must lose his life.' Laertes thinks the expedient for amusement and revenge admirably devised. Hamlet accepts the challenge; bottles are placed upon the table: the two champions appear with foils in their hands, in the presence of the whole Danish Court. They fence; Laertes wounds Hamlet with his poisoned foil. Hamlet, finding himself wounded, cries out 'Treachery!' and in a rage tears the poisoned foil from Laertes, stabs him and stabs the King; Queen Gertrude, in a fright, drinks in order to recover herself; thus she is poisoned likewise, and all four — that is, King Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes, and Hamlet — die upon the stage.

"It is remarkable that an express just then arrives, that the two chamberlains who had sailed for England with the packet sealed with the great seal, had been despatched upon their landing. Thus there does not remain one person of the drama alive; but to supply the place of the deceased there is one Fortenbrass, a relation of the family, who had conquered Poland during the representation of the piece, and who comes at the conclusion of it to offer himself as a candidate for the throne of Denmark. This," concludes our commentator, "is the whole plan of the celebrated tragedy of *Hamlet* — the masterpiece of the London Theatre! Such is the work that is preferred to *Cinna*!"

That the eighteenth century — a century renowned for its clever men, its accomplished women — could have been satisfied with so gross a travesty of so grand a drama, may well be thought astounding; but the solution may be found in the disposition of the age, whose type Voltaire may be considered.

The mind of the man who has been

called "the perfection of mediocrity," was alike common to the men and literature of the time. "Everywhere," says a clever author, "you find wit, but little soul; much reason, little good sense; fine verses, no poetry; big words, and of conviction—none!"*

The madness, whether actual or simulated, of the sad and lonely Hamlet, has puzzled far more thoughtful ages. The never-satisfied meditation on human destiny, and the dark perplexity of the events of the world which is there shadowed forth with so masterly a hand, could hardly find an echo in a period of levity and never-ending sarcasm. How should such a period have any sympathy for the most amiable of misanthropes? The quiet sensibility which yields to every motive, and is borne away by every breath of fancy,

* Hazlitt.

which is distracted in the multiplicity of its reflections, and lost in the uncertainty of its resolutions, required a far more serious state of feeling to understand and grapple with it; and a being who was or imagined himself to be called upon by Heaven to accomplish a task of retribution, and who must therefore renounce every ordinary condition of affection and happiness—becoming a sort of sacred outlaw, was likely to find but little sympathy with men who only forgave to Rousseau the appearance and forms of conviction, because they were persuaded he had none of the reality.

His age, therefore, and not Voltaire, should be blamed, and we should probably agree with Carlyle that "it was not till the nineteenth century, whose speculative genius is a sort of living Hamlet, that the tragedy of *Hamlet* could find such wondering readers."

VELOCITY OF VISION.—The last number of Pfüger's *Archiv für Physiologie* (Band iv. Heft viii.) contains a paper by M. Baxt, of St. Petersburg, "On the time requisite for a visual impression to arrive at the consciousness, and upon the duration of the period of consciousness, caused by a visual impression of definite duration." From the experiments of Helmholtz and Exner it has been shown that, if a number of ordinary letterpress letters be exhibited to the eye on a white ground, sometimes one, sometimes two or more of them are distinguished from the row according to the duration of the impression, and that of the positive after-image. M. Baxt proceeded on the same principle, and his apparatus was similar to those employed by Helmholtz, and consisted of two discs, which could be caused to revolve at known speed, but the posterior of which rotated twelve times quicker than the anterior. From the numerous experiments given (too complicated to be here inserted) it appears—1. That the consciousness of a given excitation is only realized or perfected by degrees; and, 2. That under the particular circumstances of his experiments, a period of $\frac{1}{4}$ -20th of a second must elapse between the occurrence of a relatively simple excitation of 6 or 7 letters suddenly placed before and withdrawn from the eyes and its reception or formation in the consciousness. In other experiments he found that the time required for the comprehension of a complex figure was much greater than that for a simple figure, the proportion between an ellipse and a pentagon for instance being as 1 : 5. Researches on the time requisite for the production of consciousness with various strengths of illumination gave

the result that this time was proportionate with—in rather wide limits to the degree of illumination; but if the illumination was excessively strong or weak, it increases.

If all ecclesiastical persons and personages in England were compelled to keep truthful accounts of their stewardships, the results would be very wonderful. In the North things seems to be little better, for, with reference to such a plan, the *Scotsman* says:—

For a clergyman, we should in many cases have something like this:—"Monday. Breakfast in bed. Read newspaper most of forenoon. Called on Miss Jones. Conversed an hour with her on conversion of Jews. Had wine with her. Called on Mrs. Smith, to ask about her toothache. Told me how much she enjoyed part of yesterday's sermon, which made her cry. Had brandy and water with her. Went to Presbytery and spent five delightful hours in prosecution of Robinson for heresy of free salvation. Dined with old Grippy. Grouse overdone, but claret fair. Home. Studied hard an hour, with scissors, in Spurgeon, Newton, and Theodore Parker. Elder called to speak about glebe. Gave him toddy. Hallelujah." In the case of the bonâ-fide acting elder of course, the entries would be shorter, such as the following, perhaps:—"Sabbath. Stood at plate twenty-five minutes in all, forenoon and afternoon. Three buttons, two shopkeepers' tokens, and a bad shilling in collection. Minister looked in at night. Anxious about glebe. Toddy. Amen."

CHAPTER LV.

ATTEMPTS AND COINCIDENCES.

It was months before I could resume my work. Not until Charley's absence was as it were so far established and accepted that hope had begun to assert itself against memory; that is, not until the form of Charley ceased to wander with despairful visage behind me and began to rise amongst the silvery mists before me, was I able to invent once more, or even to guide the pen with certainty over the paper. The moment however that I took the pen in my hand another necessity seized me.

Although Mary had hardly been out of my thoughts, I had heard no word of her since her brother's death. I dared not write to her father or mother after the way the former had behaved to me, and I shrunk from approaching Mary with a word that might suggest a desire to intrude the thoughts of myself upon the sacredness of her grief. Why should she think of me? Sorrow has ever something of a divine majesty, before which one must draw nigh with bowed head and bated breath:

Here I and sorrows sit;
Here is my throne: bid kings come bow to it.

But the moment I took the pen in my hand to write, an almost agonizing desire to speak to her laid hold of me. I dared not yet write to her, but, after reflection, resolved to send her some verses which should make her think of both Charley and myself, through the pages of a magazine which I knew she read.

O look not on the heart I bring —
It is too low and poor;
I would not have thee love a thing
Which I can ill endure.

Nor love me for the sake of what
I would be if I could;
O'er peaks as o'er the marshy flat,
Still soars the sky of good.

See, love, afar, the heavenly man
The will of God would make;
The thing I must be when I can,
Love now, for faith's dear sake.

But when I had finished the lines, I found the expression had fallen so far short of what I had in my feeling, that I could not rest satisfied with such an attempt at communication. I walked up and down the room thinking of the awful theories regarding the state of mind at death in which Mary had been trained. As to the mere suicide, love ever finds refuge

in presumed madness; but all of her school believed that at the moment of dissolution the fate is eternally fixed either for bliss or woe, determined by the one or the other of two vaguely defined attitudes of the mental being towards certain propositions; concerning which attitudes they were at least right in asserting that no man could of himself assume the safe one. The thought became unendurable that Mary should believe that Charley was damned — and that for ever and ever. I must and would write to her, come of it what might. That my Charley, whose suicide came of misery that the painful flutterings of his half-born wings would not bear him aloft into the empyrean, should appear to my Athanasia lost in an abyss of irrecoverable woe; that she should think of God as sending forth his spirit to sustain endless wickedness for endless torture; it was too frightful. As I wrote, the fire burned and burned, and I ended only from despair of utterance. Not a word can I now recall of what I wrote: — the strength of my feelings must have paralyzed the grasp of my memory. All I can recollect is that I closed with the expression of a passionate hope that the God who had made me and my Charley to love each other, would somewhere, some day, somehow, when each was grown stronger and purer, give us once more to each other. In that hope alone, I said, was it possible for me to live. By return of post, I received the following —

“SIR,

“After having everlastingly ruined one of my children, body and soul, for *your* sophisms will hardly alter the decrees of divine justice, — once more you lay your snares — now to drag my sole remaining child into the same abyss of perdition. Such wickedness — wickedness even to the pitch of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, I have never in the course of a large experience of impenitence found paralleled. It almost drives me to the belief that the enemy of souls is still occasionally permitted to take up his personal abode in the heart of him who wilfully turns aside from revealed truth. I forgive you for the ruin you have brought upon our fondest hopes, and the agony with which you have torn the hearts of those who more than life loved him of whom you falsely called yourself the friend. But I fear you have already gone too far ever to feel your need of that forgiveness which alone can avail you. Yet I say — Repent, for the mercy of the Lord is infinite. Though my boy is lost to me for ever, I should yet rejoice to see the instrument of his ruin plucked as a brand from the burning.

“Your obedient well-wisher,

“CHARLES OSBORNE.

"P.S.—I retain your letter for the sake of my less experienced brethren, that I may be able to afford an instance of how far the unregenerate mind can go in its antagonism to the God of Revelation."

I breathed a deep breath, and laid the letter down, mainly concerned as to whether Mary had had the chance of reading mine. I could believe any amount of tyranny in her father—even to perusing and withholding her letters; but in this I may do him injustice, for there is no common ground known to me from which to start in speculating upon his probable actions. I wrote in answer something nearly as follows:

"SIR,

"That you should do me injustice can by this time be no matter of surprise to me. Had I the slightest hope of convincing you of the fact, I should strain every mental nerve to that end. But no one can labour without hope, and as in respect of your justice I have none, I will be silent. May the God in whom I trust convince you of the cruelty of which you have been guilty; the God in whom you profess to believe, must be too like yourself to give any ground of such hope from him.

"Your obedient servant,

"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."

If Mary had read my letter, I felt assured her reading had been very different from her father's. Anyhow she could not judge me as he did, for she knew me better. She knew that for Charley's sake I had tried the harder to believe myself.

But the reproaches of one who had been so unjust to his own son, could not weigh very heavily on me, and I now resumed my work with a tolerable degree of calmness. But I wrote badly. I should have done better to go down to the Moat, and be silent. If my reader has ever seen what I wrote at that time, I should like her to know that I now wish it all unwritten—not for any utterance contained in it, but simply for its general inferiority.

Certainly work is not always required of a man. There is such a thing as a sacred idleness, the cultivation of which is now fearfully neglected. Abraham, seated in his tent door in the heat of the day, would be to the philosophers of the nineteenth century an object for uplifted hands and pointed fingers. They would see in him only the indolent Arab, whom nothing but the foolish fancy that he saw his Maker in the distance, could rouse to run.

It was clearly better to attempt no further communication with Mary at present; and I could think but of one person from

whom, without giving pain, I might hope for some information concerning her.

Here I had written a detailed account of how I contrived to meet Miss Pease, but it is not of consequence enough to my story to be allowed to remain. Suffice it to mention that one morning at length I caught sight of her in a street in Mayfair, where the family was then staying for the season, and overtaking addressed her.

She started, stared at me for a moment, and held out her hand.

"I didn't know you, Mr. Cumbermede. How much older you look! I beg your pardon. Have you been ill?"

She spoke hurriedly, and kept looking over her shoulder now and then as if afraid of being seen talking to me.

"I have had a good deal to make me older since we met last, Miss Pease," I said. "I have hardly a friend left in the world but you—that is, if you will allow me to call you one."

"Certainly, certainly," she answered, but hurriedly, and with one of those uneasy glances. "Only you must allow, Mr. Cumbermede, that—that—that—"

The poor lady was evidently unprepared to meet me on the old footing, and, at the same time, equally unwilling to hurt my feelings.

"I should be sorry to make you run a risk for my sake," I said. "Please just answer me one question. Do you know what it is to be misunderstood—to be despised without deserving it?"

She smiled sadly, and nodded her head gently two or three times.

"Then have pity on me, and let me have a little talk with you."

Again she glanced apprehensively over her shoulder.

"You are afraid of being seen with me, and I don't wonder," I said.

"Mr. Geoffrey came up with us," she answered. "I left him at breakfast. He will be going across the park to his club directly."

"Then come with me the other way—into Hyde Park," I said.

With evident reluctance, she yielded and accompanied me.

As soon as we got within Stanhope Gate, I spoke.

"A certain sad event, of which you have no doubt heard, Miss Pease, has shut me out from all communication with the family of my friend Charley Osborne. I am very anxious for some news of his sister. She is all that is left of him to me now. Can you tell me anything about her?"

"She has been very ill," she replied.

"I hope that means that she is better," I said.

"She is better, and, I hear, going on the continent, as soon as the season will permit. But, Mr. Cumbermede, you must be aware that I am under considerable restraint in talking to you. The position I hold in Sir Giles's family, although neither a comfortable nor a dignified one——"

"I understand you perfectly, Miss Pease," I returned, "and fully appreciate the sense of propriety which causes your embarrassment. But the request I am about to make has nothing to do with them or their affairs whatever. I only want your promise to let me know if you hear anything of Miss Osborne."

"I cannot tell——what——"

"What use I may be going to make of the information you give me. In a word, you do not trust me."

"I neither trust nor distrust you, Mr. Cumbermede. But I am afraid of being drawn into a correspondence with you."

"Then I will ask no promise. I will hope in your generosity. Here is my address. I pray you, as you would have helped him who fell among thieves, to let me know anything you hear about Mary Osborne."

She took my card, and turned at once, saying,

"Mind. I make no promise."

"I imagine none," I answered. "I will trust in your kindness."

And so we parted.

Unsatisfactory as the interview was, it yet gave me a little hope. I was glad to hear Mary was going abroad, for it must do her good. For me, I would endure and labour and hope. I gave her to God, as Shakespeare says somewhere, and set myself to my work. When her mind was quieter about Charley, somehow or other I might come near her again.—I could not see how.

I took my way across the Green Park.

I do not believe we notice the half of the coincidences that float past us on the stream of events. Things which would fill us with astonishment, and probably with foreboding, look us in the face and pass us by, and we know nothing of them.

As I walked along in the direction of the Mall, I became aware of a tall man coming towards me, stooping as if with age, while the length of his stride indicated a more vigorous period. He passed without lifting his head, but in the partial view of the wan and furrowed countenance I could not fail to recognize Charley's

father. Such a worn unhappiness was there depicted, that the indignation which still lingered in my bosom went out in compassion. If his sufferings might but teach him that to brand the truth of the kingdom with the private mark of opinion, must result in persecution and cruelty! He mounted the slope with strides at once eager and aimless, and I wondered whether any of the sure-coming compunctions had yet begun to overshadow the complacency of his faith; whether he had yet begun to doubt if it pleased the Son of Man that a youth should be driven from the gates of truth, because he failed to recognize her image in the faces of the janitors.

Aimless, also, I turned into the Mall, and again I started at the sight of a known figure. Was it possible?—could it be my Lilith betwixt the shafts of a public cabriolet? Fortunately it was empty. I hailed it, and jumped up, telling the driver to take me to my chambers. My poor Lilith! She was working like one who had never been loved! So far as I knew, she had never been in harness before. She was badly groomed and thin, but much of her old spirit remained. I soon entered into negotiations with the driver, whose property she was, and made her my own once more, with a delight I could ill express in plain prose—for my friends were indeed few. I wish I could draw a picture of the lovely creature, when at length, having concluded my bargain, I approached her, and called her by her name! She turned her head sideways towards me with a low whinny of pleasure, and when I walked a little away, walked wearily after me. I took her myself to livery stables near me, and wrote for Styles. His astonishment when he saw her was amusing.

"Good Lord! Miss Lilith!" was all he could say—for some moments.

In a few days she had begun to look like herself, and I sent her home with Styles. I should hardly like to say how much the recovery of her did to restore my spirits: I could not help regarding it as a good omen.

And now, the first bitterness of my misery having died a natural death, I sought again some of the friends I had made through Charley, and experienced from them great kindness. I began also to go into society a little, for I had found that invention is ever ready to lose the forms of life if it be not kept under the ordinary pressure of its atmosphere. As it is, I doubt much if any of my books are

more than partially true to those forms, for I have ever heeded them too little; but I believe I have been true to the heart of man. But that heart I have ever regarded more as the fountain of aspiration than the grave of fruition. The discomfiture of enemies and a happy marriage never seemed to me ends of sufficient value to close a history withal — I mean a fictitious history wherein one may set forth joys and sorrows which in a real history must walk shadowed under the veil of modesty; for the soul still less than the body, will consent to be revealed to all eyes. Hence, although most of my books have seemed true to some, they have all seemed visionary to most.

A year passed away, during which I never left London. I heard from Miss Pease — that Miss Osborne, although much better, was not going to return until after another winter. I wrote and thanked her, and heard no more. It may seem I accepted such ignorance with strange indifference; but even to the reader for whom alone I am writing, I cannot, as things are, attempt to lay open all my heart. I have not written and cannot write how I thought, projected, brooded, and dreamed — all about *her*; how I hoped when I wrote that she might read; how I questioned what I had written, to find whether it would look to her what I had intended it to appear.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE LAST VISION.

I HAD engaged to accompany one of Charley's barrister-friends, in whose society I had found considerable satisfaction, to his father's house — to spend the evening with some friends of the family. The gathering was chiefly for talk, and was a kind of thing I disliked, finding its aimlessness and flicker depressing. Indeed, partly from the peculiar circumstances of my childhood, partly from what I had suffered, I always found my spirits highest when alone. Still, the study of humanity apart, I felt that I ought not to shut myself out from my kind but endure some little irksomeness, if only for the sake of keeping alive that surface friendliness which has its value in the nourishment of the deeper affections. On this particular occasion, however, I yielded the more willingly, that, in the revival of various memories of Charley, it had occurred to me that I once heard him say that his sister had a regard for one of the ladies of the family.

There were not many people in the

drawing-room when we arrived, and my friend's mother alone was there to entertain them. With her I was chatting when one of her daughters entered, accompanied by a lady in mourning. For one moment I felt as if on the borders of insanity. My brain seemed to surge like the waves of a wind-tormented tide, so that I dared not make a single step forward lest my limbs should disobey me. It was indeed Mary Osborne; but oh, how changed! The rather full face had grown delicate and thin, and the fine pure complexion if possible finer and purer, but certainly more ethereal and evanescent. It was as if suffering had removed some substance unapt,* and rendered her body a better fitting garment for her soul. Her face, which had before required the softening influences of sleep and dreams to give it the plasticity necessary for complete expression, was now full of a repressed expression, if I may be allowed the phrase — a latent something ever on the tremble, ever on the point of breaking forth. It was as if the nerves had grown finer, more tremulous, or, rather, more vibrative. Touched to finer issues they could never have been, but suffering had given them a more responsive thrill. In a word she was the Athanasia of my dream, not the Mary Osborne of the Moldwarp library.

Conquering myself at last, and seeing a favourable opportunity, I approached her. I think the fear lest her father should enter, gave me the final impulse; otherwise I could have been contented to gaze on her for hours in motionless silence.

"May I speak to you, Mary?" I said.

She lifted her eyes and her whole face towards mine, without a smile, without a word. Her features remained perfectly still, but, like the outbreak of a fountain, the tears rushed into her eyes and overflowed in silent weeping. Not a sob, not a convulsive movement accompanied their flow.

"Is your father here?" I asked.

She shook her head.

"I thought you were abroad somewhere — I did not know where."

Again she shook her head. She dared not speak, knowing that if she made the attempt she must break down.

"I will go away till you can bear the sight of me," I said.

She half-stretched out a thin white hand, but whether to detain me or bid me farewell I do not know, for it dropped again on her knee.

* Spenser's "Hymne in Honour of Beautie."

"I will come to you by and by," I said, and moved away.

The rooms rapidly filled, and in a few minutes I could not see the corner where I had left her. I endured everything for a while, and then made my way back to it; but she was gone, and I could find her nowhere. A lady began to sing. When the applause which followed her performance was over, my friend, who happened to be near me, turned abruptly and said.

"Now, Cumbermede, *you* sing."

The truth was, that since I had loved Mary Osborne, I had attempted to cultivate a certain small gift of song which I thought I possessed. I dared not touch any existent music, for I was certain I should break down; but having a faculty—somewhat thin, I fear—for writing songs, and finding that a shadowy air always accompanied the birth of the words, I had presumed to study music a little, in the hope of becoming able to fix the melody—the twin sister of the song. I had made some progress, and had grown able to write down a simple thought. There was little presumption then, in venturing my voice, limited as was its scope, upon a trifle of my own. Tempted by the opportunity of realizing hopes consciously wild, I obeyed my friend, and, sitting down to the instrument in some trepidation, sang the following verses:—

I dreamed that I woke from a dream,
And the house was full of light;
At the window two angel Sorrows
Held back the curtains of night.

The door was wide, and the house
Was full of the morning wind;
At the door two armed warders
Stood silent, with faces blind.

I ran to the open door,
For the wind of the world was sweet;
The warders with crossing weapons
Turned back my issuing feet.

I ran to the shining windows—
There the winged Sorrows stood;
Silently they held the curtains,
And the light fell through in a flood.

I clomb to the highest window—
Ah! there, with shadowed brow,
Stood one lonely radiant Sorrow,
And that, my love, was thou.

I could not have sung this in public but that no one would suspect it was my own, or was in the least likely to understand a word of it—except her for whose ears and heart it was intended.

As soon as I had finished, I rose and

once more went searching for Mary. But as I looked, sadly fearing she was gone, I heard her voice close behind me.

"Are those verses your own, Mr. Cumbermede?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

I turned trembling. Her lovely face was looking up at me.

"Yes," I answered—"as much my own as that I believe they are not to be found anywhere. But they were given to me rather than made by me."

"Would you let me have them? I am not sure that I understand them."

"I am not sure that I understand them myself. They are for the heart rather than the mind. Of course you shall have them. They were written for you. All I have, all I am is yours."

Her face flushed and grew pale again instantly.

"You must not talk so," she said. "Remember."

"I can never forget. I do not know why you say *remember*."

"On second thoughts, I must not have the verses. I beg your pardon."

"Mary, you bewilder me. I have no right to ask you to explain, except that you speak as if I must understand. What have they been telling you about me?"

"Nothing—at least nothing that—"
She paused.

"I try to live innocently, and were it only for your sake, shall never stop searching for the thread of life in its ravelled skein."

"Do not say for *my* sake, Mr. Cumbermede. That means nothing. Say for your own sake if not for God's."

"If *you* are going to turn away from me, I don't mind how soon I follow Charley."

All this was said in a half whisper, I bending towards her where she sat, a little sheltered by one of a pair of folding doors. My heart was like to break—or rather it seemed to have vanished out of me altogether, lost in a gulf of emptiness. Was this all? Was this the end of my dreaming? To be thus pushed aside by the angel of my resurrection?

"Hush! hush!" she said kindly. "You must have many friends. But—"

"But you will be my friend no more? Is that it, Mary? Oh, if you knew all! And you are never never to know it!"

Her still face was once more streaming with tears. I choked mine back, terrified at the thought of being observed; and without even offering my hand, left her and made my way through the crowd to the stair. On the landing I met Geoffrey

Brotherton. We stared each other in the face, and passed.

I did not sleep much that night, and when I did sleep, woke from one wretched dream after another, now crying aloud, and now weeping. What could I have done? or rather what could any one have told her I had done to make her behave thus to me? She did not look angry—or even displeased—only sorrowful, very sorrowful; and she seemed to take it for granted I knew what it meant. When at length I finally woke after an hour of less troubled sleep, I found some difficulty in convincing myself that the real occurrences of the night before had not been one of the many troubled dreams that had scared my repose. Even after the dreams had all vanished, and the facts remained, they still appeared more like a dim dream of the dead—the vision of Mary was so wan and hopeless, memory alone looking out from her worn countenance. There had been no warmth in her greeting, no resentment in her aspect; we met as if we had parted but an hour before, only that an open grave was between us, across which we talked in the voices of dreamers. She had sought to raise no barrier between us, just because we *could* not meet, save as one of the dead and one of the living. What could it mean? But with the growing day awoke a little courage. I would at least try to find out what it meant. Surely *all* my dreams were not to vanish like the mist of the morning! To lose my dreams would be far worse than to lose the so-called realities of life. What were these to me? What value lay in such reality? Even God was as yet so dim and far off as to seem rather in the region of dreams—of those true dreams, I hoped, that shadow forth the real—than in the actual visible present. “Still,” I said to myself, “she had not cast me off; she did not refuse to know me; she did ask for my song, and I will send it.”

I wrote it out, adding a stanza to the verses:—

I bowed my head before her,
And stood trembling in the light;
She dropped the heavy curtain,
And the house was full of night.

I then sought my friend's chambers.

“I was not aware you knew the Osbornes,” I said. “I wonder you never told me, seeing Charley and you were such friends.”

“I never saw one of them till last night. My sister and she knew each other some time ago, and have met again of late.

What a lovely creature she is! But what became of you last night? You must have left before any one else.”

“I didn't feel well.”

“You don't look the thing.”

“I confess meeting Miss Osborne rather upset me.”

“It had the same effect on her. She was quite ill, my sister said this morning. No wonder! Poor Charley! I always had a painful feeling that he would come to grief somehow.”

“Let's hope he's come to something else by this time, Marston,” I said.

“Amen,” he returned.

“Is her father or mother with her?”

“No. They are to fetch her away—next week, I think it is.”

I had now no fear of my communication falling into other hands, and therefore sent the song by post, with a note, in which I begged her to let me know if I had done anything to offend her. Next morning I received the following reply.

“No, Wilfrid—for Charley's sake, I must call you by your name—you have done nothing to offend me. Thank you for the song. I did not want you to send it, but I will keep it. You must not write to me again. Do not forget what we used to write about. God's ways are not ours. Your friend, Mary Osborne.”

I rose and went out, not knowing whither. Half-stunned, I roamed the streets. I ate nothing that day, and when towards night I found myself near my chambers, I walked in as I had come out, having no intent, no future. I felt very sick, and threw myself on my bed. There I passed the night, half in sleep, half in a helpless prostration. When I look back, it seems as if some spiritual narcotic must have been given me, else how should the terrible time have passed and left me alive? When I came to myself, I found I was ill, and I longed to hide my head in the nest of my childhood. I had always looked on the Moat as my refuge at the last; now it seemed the only desirable thing—a lonely nook, in which to lie down and end the dream there begun—either, as it now seemed, in an eternal sleep, or the inburst of a dreary light. After the last refuge it could afford me it must pass from my hold; but I was yet able to determine whither. I rose and went to Marston.

“Marston,” I said, “I want to make my will.”

“All right!” he returned; “but you look as if you meant to register it as well. You've got a feverish cold: I see it in your eyes. Come along. I'll go home with

you, and fetch a friend of mine who will give you something to do you good."

"I can't rest till I have made my will," I persisted.

"Well, there's no harm in that," he rejoined. "It won't take long, I dare say."

"It needn't anyhow. I only want to leave the small real property I have to Miss Osborne, and the still smaller personal property to yourself."

He laughed.

"All right, old boy! I haven't the slightest objection to your willing your traps to me, but every objection in the world to your *leaving* them. To be sure, every man, with anything to leave, ought to make his will betimes; — so fire away."

In a little while the draught was finished.

"I shall have it ready for your signature by to-morrow," he said.

I insisted it should be done at once. I was going home, I said. He yielded. The will was engrossed, signed, and witnessed, that same morning; and in the afternoon I set out, the first part of the journey by rail, for the Moat.

CHAPTER LVII.

ANOTHER DREAM.

THE excitement of having something to do, had helped me over the morning, and the pleasure of thinking of what I had done, helped me through half the journey; but before I reached home, I was utterly exhausted. Then I had to drive round by the farm, and knock up Mrs. Herbert and Styles.

I could not bear the thought of my own room, and ordered a fire in my grandmother's where they soon got me into bed. All I remember of that night is the following dream.

I found myself at the entrance of the ice-cave. A burning sun beat on my head, and at my feet flowed the brook which gathered its life from the decay of the ice. I stooped to drink; but, cool to the eye and hand and lips, it yet burned me within like fire. I would seek shelter from the sun inside the cave. I entered, and knew that the cold was all around me; I even felt it; but somehow it did not enter into me. My brain, my very bones burned with fire. I went in and in. The blue atmosphere closed around me, and the colour entered into my soul till it seemed dyed with the potent blue. My very being swam and floated in a blue atmosphere of its own. My intention — I can recall it perfectly — was but to walk to the end, a few yards, then turn and again brave the

sun; for I had a dim feeling of forsaking my work, of playing truant, or of being cowardly in thus avoiding the heat. Something else too was wrong, but I could not clearly tell what. As I went on, I began to wonder that I had not come to the end. The gray walls yet rose about me, and ever the film of dissolution flowed along their glassy faces to the runnel below; still before me opened the depth of blue atmosphere, deepening as I went. After many windings the path began to branch, and soon I was lost in a labyrinth of passages, of which I knew not why I should choose one rather than another. It was useless now to think of returning. Arbitrarily I chose the narrowest way, and still went on.

A discoloration of the ice attracted my attention, and as I looked it seemed to retreat into the solid mass. There was something not ice within it which grew more and more distinct as I gazed, until at last I plainly distinguished the form of my grandmother, lying as then when my aunt made me touch her face. A few yards further on, lay the body of my uncle, as I saw him in his coffin. His face was dead white in the midst of the cold clear ice, his eyes closed, and his arms straight by his side. He lay like an alabaster king upon his tomb. *It was he*, I thought, but he would never speak to me more — never look at me — never more awake. There lay all that was left of him — the cold frozen memory of what he had been and would never be again. I did not weep. I only knew somehow in my dream that life was all a wandering in a frozen cave, where the faces of the living were dark with the coming corruption, and the memories of the dead, cold and clear and hopeless evermore, alone were lovely.

I walked further; for the ice might possess yet more of the past — all that was left me of life. And again I stood and gazed, for, deep within, I saw the form of Charley — at rest now, his face bloodless, but not so death-like as my uncle's. His hands were laid palm to palm over his bosom, and pointed upwards as if praying for comfort where comfort was none: here at least were no flickerings of the rainbow fancies of faith and hope and chaity! I gazed in comfortless content for a time on the repose of my weary friend, and then went on, inly moved to see what further the ice of the godless region might hold. Nor had I wandered far when I saw the form of Mary, lying like the rest, only that her hands were crossed on her bosom. I stood, wondering to find myself so little

moved. But when the ice drew nigh me, and would have closed around me, my heart leaped for joy; and when the heat of my lingering life repelled it, my heart sunk within me, and I said to myself: "Death will not have me. I may not join her even in the land of cold forgetfulness: I may not even be nothing *with* her." The tears began to flow down my face, like the thin veil of water that kept ever flowing down the face of the ice; and as I wept, the water before me flowed faster and faster, till it rippled in a sheet down the icy wall. Faster and yet faster it flowed, falling, with the sound as of many showers, into the runnel below, which rushed splashing and gurgling away from the foot of the vanishing wall. Faster and faster it flowed, until the solid mass fell in a foaming cataract and swept in a torrent across the cave. I followed the retreating wall, through the seething water at its foot. Thinner and thinner grew the dividing mass; nearer and nearer came the form of my Mary. "I shall yet clasp her," I cried; "her dead form will kill me, and I too shall be inclosed in the friendly ice. I shall not be with her, alas; but neither shall I be without her, for I shall depart into the lovely nothingness." Thinner and thinner grew the dividing wall. The skirt of her shroud hung like a wet weed in the falling torrent. I kneeled in the river, and crept nearer, with outstretched arms: when the vanishing ice set the dead form free, it should rest in those arms—the last gift of the life-dream—for then, surely I *must* die. "Let me pass in the agony of a lonely embrace!" I cried. As I spoke she moved. I started to my feet, stung into life by the agony of a new hope. Slowly the ice released her, and gently she rose to her feet. The torrents of water ceased—they had flowed but to set her free. Her eyes were still closed, but she made one blind step towards me, and laid her left hand on my head, her right hand on my heart. Instantly, body and soul, I was cool as a summer eve after a thunder-shower. For a moment, precious as an æon, she held her hands upon me—then slowly opened her eyes. Out of them flashed the living soul of my Athanasia. She closed the lids again slowly over the lovely splendour; the water in which we stood rose around us; and on its last billow she floated away through the winding passage of the cave. I sought to follow her, but could not. I cried aloud and awoke.

But the burning heat had left me; I felt that I had passed a crisis, and had be-

gun to recover—a conviction which would have been altogether unwelcome, but for the poor shadow of a reviving hope which accompanied it. Such a dream, come whence it might, could not but bring comfort with it. The hope grew, and was my sole medicine.

Before the evening I felt better, and, though still very feeble, managed to write to Marston, letting him know I was safe, and requesting him to forward any letters that might arrive.

The next day, I rose, but was unable to work. The very thought of writing sickened me. Neither could I bear the thought of returning to London. I tried to read, but threw aside book after book, without being able to tell what one of them was about. If for a moment I seemed to enter into the subject, before I reached the bottom of the page, I found I had not an idea as to what the words meant or whither they tended. After many failures, unwilling to give myself up to idle brooding, I fortunately tried some of the mystical poetry of the seventeenth century: the difficulties of that I found rather stimulate than repel me; while, much as there was in the form to displease the taste, there was more in the matter to rouse the intellect. I found also some relief in resuming my mathematical studies: the abstraction of them acted as an anodyne. But the days dragged wearily.

As soon as I was able to get on horseback, the tone of mind and body began to return. I felt as if into me some sort of animal healing passed from Lilith; and who can tell in how many ways the lower animals may not minister to the higher?

One night I had a strange experience. I give it without argument, perfectly aware that the fact may be set down to the disordered state of my physical nature, and that without injustice.

I had not for a long time thought about one of the questions which had so much occupied Charley and myself—that of immortality. As to any communication between the parted, I had never, during his life pondered the possibility of it, although I had always had an inclination to believe that such intercourse had in rare instances taken place: former periods of the world's history, when that blinding self-consciousness which is the bane of ours was yet undeveloped, must, I thought, have been far more favourable to its occurrence. Anyhow I was convinced that it was not to be gained by effort. I confess that, in the unthinking agony of grief after Charley's death, many a time when I woke in

the middle of the night and could sleep no more, I sat up in bed and prayed him, if he heard me, to come to me, and let me tell him the truth — for my sake to let me know at least that he lived, for then I should be sure that one day all would be well. But if there was any hearing, there was no answer. Charley did not come; the prayer seemed to vanish in the darkness; and my more self-possessed meditations never justified the hope of any such being heard.

One night I was sitting in my grannie's room, which, except my uncle's, was now the only one I could bear to enter. I had been reading for some time very quietly, but had leaned back in my chair, and let my thoughts go wandering whither they would, when all at once I was possessed by the conviction that Charley was near me. I saw nothing, heard nothing; of the recognized senses of humanity not one gave me a hint of a presence; and yet my whole body was aware — so at least it seemed — of the proximity of another *I*. It was as if some nervous region commensurate with my frame, were now for the first time revealed by contact with an object suitable for its apprehension. Like Eliphaz, I felt the hair of my head stand up — not from terror, but simply, as it seemed, from the presence and its strangeness. Like others also of whom I have read, who believed themselves in the presence of the disembodied, I could not speak. I tried, but as if the medium for sound had been withdrawn, and an empty gulf lay around me, no word followed, although my very soul was full of the cry — *Charley! Charley!* And alas! in a few moments, like the faint vanishing of an unrealized thought, leaving only the assurance that something half-born from out the unknown had been there, the influence faded and died. It passed from me like the shadow of a cloud, and once more I knew but my poor lonely self, returning to its candles, its open book, its burning fire.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE DARKEST HOUR.

SUFFERING is perhaps the only preparation for suffering: still I was but poorly prepared for what followed.

Having gathered strength, and a certain quietness which I could not mistake for peace, I returned to London towards the close of the spring. I had in the interval heard nothing of Mary. The few letters Marston had sent on had been al-

most exclusively from my publishers. But the very hour I reached my lodging, came a note, which I opened trembling, for it was in the handwriting of Miss Pease.

"Dear Sir, I cannot, I think, be wrong in giving you a piece of information which will be in the newspapers to-morrow morning. Your old acquaintance, and my young relative, Mr. Brotherton, was married this morning, at St. George's, Hanover Square, to your late friend's sister, Miss Mary Osborne. They have just left for Dover on their way to Switzerland. — Your sincere well-wisher,
JANE PEASE."

Even at this distance of time, I should have to exhort myself to write with calmness, were it not that the utter despair of conveying my feelings, if indeed my soul had not for the time passed beyond feeling into some abyss unknown to human consciousness, renders it unnecessary. This despair of communication has two sources — the one simply the conviction of the impossibility of expressing *any* feeling, much more such feeling as mine then was — and is; the other the conviction that only to the heart of love can the sufferings of love speak. The attempt of a lover to move, by the presentation of his own suffering, the heart of her who loves him not, is as unavailing as it is unmanly. The poet who sings most wailfully of the torments of the lover's hell, is but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal in the ears of her who has at best only a general compassion to meet the song withal — possibly only an individual vanity which crowns her with his woes as with the trophies of a conquest. True, he is understood and worshipped by all the other wailful souls in the first infernal circle, as one of the great men of their order — able to put into words full of sweet torment the dire hopelessness of their misery; but for such the singer, singing only for ears eternally deaf to his song, cares nothing; or if for a moment he receive consolation from their sympathy, it is but a passing weakness which the breath of an indignant self-condemnation — even contempt, the next moment sweeps away. In God alone there must be sympathy and cure; but I had not then — have I indeed yet found what that cure is? I am at all events now able to write with calmness. If suffering destroyed itself, as some say, mine ought to have disappeared long ago; but to that I can neither pretend nor confess.

For the first time, after all I had encountered, I knew what suffering could be.

It is still at moments an agony as of hell to recall this and the other thought that then stung me like a white-hot arrow: the shafts have long been drawn out, but the barbed heads are still there. I neither stormed nor maddened. I only felt a freezing hand lay hold of my heart, and gripe it closer and closer till I should have sickened, but that the pain ever stung me into fresh life; and ever since I have gone about the world with that hard lump somewhere in my bosom into which the griping hand and the griped heart have grown and stiffened.

I fled at once back to my solitary house, looking for no relief in its solitude, only the negative comfort of escaping the eyes of men. I could not bear the sight of my fellow-creatures. To say that the world had grown black to me, is as nothing: I ceased—I will not say to *believe* in God, for I never dared say that mighty thing—but I ceased to hope in God. The universe had grown a negation which yet forced its presence upon me—a death that bred worms. If there were a God anywhere, this universe could be nothing more than his forsaken moth-eaten garment. He was a God who did not care. Order was all an invention of phosphorescent human brains; light itself the mocking smile of a Jupiter over his writhing sacrifices. At times I laughed at the tortures of my own heart, saying to it, "Writhe on, worm; thou deservest thy writhing in that thou writhest. Godless creature, why dost thou not laugh with me? Am I not merry over thee and the world—in that ye are both rottenness to the core?" The next moment my heart and I would come together with a shock, and I knew it was myself that scorned myself.

Such being my mood, it will cause no surprise if I say that I too was tempted to suicide; the wonder would have been if it had been otherwise. The soft keen curves of that fatal dagger, which had not only slain Charley but all my hopes—for had he lived this horror could not have been—grew almost lovely in my eyes. Until now it had looked cruel, fiendish, hateful; but now I would lay it before me and contemplate it. In some griefs there is a wonderful power of self-contemplation, which indeed forms their only solace; the moment it can set the sorrow away from itself sufficiently to regard it, the tortured heart begins to repose; but suddenly, like a waking tiger, the sorrow leaps again into its lair, and the agony commences anew. The dagger was the type of my grief and its torture: might it not, like the brazen

serpent, be the cure for the sting of its living counterpart? But alas! where was the certainty? Could I slay *myself*? This outer breathing form I could dismiss—but the pain was *not there*. I was not mad, and I knew that a deeper death than that could give, at least than I had any assurance that could give, alone could bring repose. For, impossible as I had always found it actually to believe in immortality, I now found it equally impossible to believe in annihilation. And even if annihilation should be the final result, who could tell but it might require ages of a horrible slow-decaying dream-consciousness, to kill the living thing which felt itself other than its body?

Until now, I had always accepted what seemed the natural and universal repugnance to absolute dissolution, as the strongest argument on the side of immortality;—for why should a man shrink from that which belonged to his nature? But now annihilation seemed the one lovely thing, the one sole only lonely thought in which lay no blackness of burning darkness. Oh for one eternal unconscious sleep!—the nearest likeness we can cherish of that inconceivable nothingness—ever denied by the very thinking of it—by the vain attempt to realize that whose very existence is the knowing nothing of itself! Could that dagger have insured me such repose, or had there been any draught of Lethe, utter Lethe, whose blessed poison would have assuredly dissipated like a fume this conscious, self-tormenting me, I should not now be writhing anew, as in the clutches of an old grief, clasping me like a corpse, stung to simulated life by the galvanic battery of recollection. Vivid as it seems—all I suffer as I write is but a faint phantasm of what I then endured.

I learned therefore that to some minds the argument for immortality drawn from the apparently universal shrinking from annihilation must be ineffectual, seeing they themselves do not shrink from it. Convince a man that there is no God—or, for I doubt if that be altogether possible—make it, I will say, impossible for him to hope in God—and it cannot be that annihilation should seem an evil. If there is no God, annihilation is the one thing to be longed for with all that might of longing which is the mainspring of human action. In a word it is not immortality the human heart cries out after, but that immortal eternal thought whose life is its life, whose wisdom is its wisdom, whose ways and whose thoughts shall—must

one day—become its ways and its thoughts. Dissociate immortality from the living Immortality and it is not a thing to be desired—not a thing that can on those terms, or even on the fancy of those terms, be desired.

But such thoughts as these were far enough from me then. I lived because I despaired of death. I ate by a sort of blind animal instinct, and so lived. The time had been when I would depise myself for being able to eat in the midst of emotion; but now I cared so little for the emotion even, that eating or not eating had nothing to do with the matter. I ate because meat was set before me; I slept because sleep came upon me. It was a horrible time. My life seemed only a vermiculate one, a crawling about of half-thoughts-half-feelings through the corpse of a decaying existence. The heart of being was withdrawn from me, and my life was but the vacant pericardium in which it had once throbbed out and sucked in the red fountains of life and gladness.

I would not be thought to have fallen to this all but bottomless depth only because I had lost Mary. Still less was it because of the fact that in her, around whom had gathered all the devotion with which the man in me could regard woman, I had lost all womankind. It was the loss of Mary, as I then judged it, not, I repeat, the fact that I had lost her. It was that she had lost herself. Thence it was, I say, that I lost my hope in God. For, if there were a God, how could he let purity be clasped in the arms of defilement? how could he marry my Athanasia—not to a corpse, but to a Plague? Here was the man who had done more to ruin her brother than any but her father, and God had given her to him! I had had—with the commonest of men—some notion of womanly purity—how was it that hers had not instinctively shuddered and shrunk? how was it that the life of it had not taken refuge with death to shun bare contact with the coarse impurity of such a nature as that of Geoffrey Brotherton? My dreams had been dreams indeed! Was my Athanasia dead, or had she never been? In my thought, she had “said to Corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.” Who should henceforth say of any woman that she was impure? She *might* love him—true; but what was she then who was able to love such a man? It was this that stormed the citadel of my hope, and drove me from even thinking of a God.

Gladly would I now have welcomed any

bodily suffering that could hide me from myself; but no illness came. I was a living pain, a conscious ill-being. In a thousand forms those questions would ever recur, but without hope of answer. When I fell asleep from exhaustion, hideous visions of her with Geoffrey would start me up with a great cry, sometimes with a curse on my lips. Nor were they the most horrible of those dreams in which she would help him to mock me. Once, and only once, I found myself dreaming the dream of that night, and I knew that I had dreamed it before. Through palace and chapel and charnel-house, I followed her, ever with a dim sense of awful result; and when at the last she lifted the shining veil, instead of the face of Athanasia, the bare teeth of a skull grinned at me from under a spotted shroud, through which the sunlight shone from behind, revealing all its horrors. I was not mad—my reason had not given way: *how* remains a marvel.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE DAWN.

ALL places were alike to me now—for the universe was but one dreary chasm whence I could not escape. One evening I sat by the open window of my chamber, which looked towards those trees and that fatal Moldwarp Hall. My suffering had now grown dull by its own excess, and I had moments of listless vacuity, the nearest approach to peace I had yet experienced. It was a fair evening of early summer—but I was utterly careless of nature as of all beyond it. The sky was nothing to me—and the earth was all unlovely. There I sat, heavy, but free from torture; a kind of quiet had stolen over me. I was roused by the tiniest breath of wind on my cheek, as if the passing wing of some butterfly had fanned me; and on that faintest motion came a scent as from long-forgotten fields, a scent like as of sweet-peas or wild roses, but of neither: flowers were none nearer me than the gardens of the Hall. I started with a cry. It was the scent of the garments of my Athanasia, as I had dreamed it in my dream! Whence that wind had borne it, who could tell? but in the hush that had overgrown my being it had found a cranny, and through that cranny, with the scent, Nature entered. I looked up to the blue sky, wept, and for the first time fell on my knees. “O God!” I cried, and that was all. But what are the prayers of the whole universe more than expansions of

that one cry? It is not what God can give us but God that we want. Call the whole thing fancy if you will; it was at least no fancy that the next feeling of which I was conscious was compassion: from that moment I began to search heaven and earth and the soul of man and woman for excuses wherewith to clothe the idea of Mary Osborne. For weeks and weeks I pondered, and by degrees the following conclusions wrought themselves out in my brain:—

That she had never seen life as a whole; that her religious theories had ever been eating away and absorbing her life, so preventing her religion from interpenetrating and glorifying it; that in regard to certain facts and consequences she had been left to an ignorance which her innocence rendered profound; that, attracted by the worldly splendour of the offer, her father and mother had urged her compliance, and, broken in spirit by the fate of Charley, and having always been taught that self-denial was in itself a virtue, she had taken the worldly desires of her parents for the will of God, and blindly yielded; that Brotherton was capable, for his ends, of representing himself as possessed of religion enough to satisfy the scruples of her parents, and, such being satisfied, she had resisted her own as evil things.

Whether his hatred of me had any share in his desire to possess her, I hardly thought of inquiring.

Of course I did not for a single moment believe that Mary had had the slightest notion of the bitterness, the torture, the temptation of Satan it would be to me. Doubtless the feeling of her father concerning the death of Charley had seemed to hollow an impassable gulf between us. Worn and weak, and not knowing what she did, my dearest friend had yielded herself to the embrace of my deadliest foe. If he was such as I had too good reason for believing him, she was far more to be pitied than I. Lonely she must be—lonely as I—for who was there to understand and love her? Bitterly too by this time she must have suffered, for the dove can never be at peace in the bosom of the vulture, or cease to hate the carrion of which he must ever carry about with him at least the disgusting memorials. Alas! I too had been her enemy, and had cried out against her; but now I would love her more and better than ever! Oh! if I knew but something I could do for her, some service which on the bended knees of my spirit I might offer her! I clomb the heights of my grief, and looked abroad,

but alas! I was such a poor creature! A dabbler in the ways of the world, a writer of tales which even those who cared to read them counted fantastic and Utopian, who was I to weave a single silken thread into the web of her life? How could I bear her one poorest service? Never in this world could I approach her near enough to touch yet once again the hem of her garment. All I could do was to love her. No—I could and did suffer for her. Alas! that suffering was only for myself, and could do nothing for her! It was indeed some consolation to me that my misery came from her hand; but if she knew it, it would but add to her pain. In my heart I could only pray her pardon for my wicked and selfish thoughts concerning her, and vow again and ever to regard her as my Athanasia.—But yes! there was one thing I *could* do for her: I would be a true man for her sake; she should have some satisfaction in me; I would once more arise and go to my Father.

The instant the thought arose in my mind, I fell down before the possible God in an agony of weeping. All complaint of my own doom had vanished, now that I began to do her the justice of love. Why should I be blessed—here and now at least—according to my notions of blessedness? Let the great heart of the universe do with me as it pleased! Let the Supreme take his own time to justify himself to the heart that sought to love him! I gave up myself, was willing to suffer, to be a living pain, so long as he pleased; and the moment I yielded, half the pain was gone; I gave my Athanasia yet again to God, and all *might* yet, in some high, far-off, better-world-way, be well. I could wait and endure. If only God was, and was God, then it was, or would be, well with Mary—well with me!

But, as I still sat, a flow of sweet sad repentant thought passing gently through my bosom, all at once the self to which, unable to confide it to the care of its own very life, the God conscious of himself and in himself conscious of it, I had been for months offering the sacrifices of despair and indignation, arose in spectral hideousness before me. I saw that I, a child of the infinite, had been worshipping the finite—and therein dragging down the infinite towards the fate of the finite. I do not mean that in Mary Osborne I had been worshipping the finite. It was the eternal, the lovely, the true that in her I had been worshipping: in myself I had been wor-

shipping the mean, the selfish, the finite, the god of spiritual greed. Only in himself *can* a man find the finite to worship: only in turning back upon himself does he create the finite for and by his worship. All the works of God are everlasting; the only perishable are some of the works of man. All love is a worship of the infinite: what is called a man's love for himself, is not love; it is but a phantastic resemblance of love; it is a creating of the finite, a creation of death. A man *cannot* love himself. If all love be not creation — as I think it is — it is at least the only thing in harmony with creation and the love of oneself is its absolute opposite. I sickened at the sight of myself: how should I ever get rid of the demon? The same instant I saw the one escape: I must offer it back to its source — commit it to him who had made it. I must live no more from it, but form the source of it; seek to know nothing more of it than he gave me to know by his presence therein. Thus might I become one with the Eternal in such an absorption as Buddha had never dreamed; thus might I draw life ever fresh from its fountain. And in that fountain alone would I contemplate its reflex. What flashes of self-consciousness might cross me, should be God's gift, not of my seeking, and offered again to him in ever new self-sacrifice. Alas! alas! this I saw then, and this I yet see; but oh, how far am I still from that divine annihilation! The only comfort is, God is, and I am his, else I should not be at all.

I saw too that thus God also lives — in his higher way. I saw, shadowed out in the absolute devotion of Jesus to men, that the very life of God by which we live is an everlasting eternal giving of himself away. He asserts himself, only, solely, altogether, in an infinite sacrifice of devotion. So must we live; the child must be as the father; live he cannot on any other plan, struggle as he may. The father requires of him nothing that he is not or does not himself, who is the one prime unconditioned sacrificer and sacrifice. I threw myself on the ground, and offered back my poor wretched self to its owner, to be taken and kept, purified and made divine.

The same moment a sense of reviving health began to possess me. With many fluctuations, it has possessed me, has grown, and is now, if not a persistent cheerfulness, yet an unyielding hope. The world bloomed again around me. The sunrise again grew gloriously dear; and the sadness of the moon was lighted from

a higher sun than that which returns with the morning.

My relation to Mary, resolved and reformed itself in my mind into something I can explain only by the following — call it dream: it was not a dream; call it vision: it was not a vision; and yet I will tell it as if it were either, being far truer than either.

I lay like a child on one of God's arms. I could not see his face, and the arm that held me was a great cloudy arm. I knew that on his other arm lay Mary. But between us were forests and plains, mountains and great seas; and, unspeakably worse than all, a gulf with which words had nothing to do, a gulf of pure separation, of impassable nothingness; across which no device, I say not of human skill, but of human imagination, could cast a single connecting cord. There lay Mary, and here lay I — both in God's arms — utterly parted. As in a swoon I lay, through which suddenly came the words: "What God hath joined, man cannot sunder." I lay thinking what they could mean. All at once I thought I knew. Straightway I rose on the cloudy arm, looked down on a measureless darkness beneath me, and up on a great, dreary, world-filled eternity above me, and crept along the arm towards the bosom of God.

In telling my — neither vision nor dream nor ecstasy, I cannot help it that the forms grow so much plainer and more definite in the words than they were in the revelation. Words always give either too much or too little shape: when you want to be definite, you find your words clumsy and blunt; when you want them for a vague shadowy image, you straightway find them give a sharp and impertinent outline, refusing to lend themselves to your undefined though vivid thought. Forms themselves are hard enough to manage, but words are unmanageable. I must therefore trust to the heart of my reader.

I crept into the bosom of God, and along a great cloudy peace, which I could not understand, for it did not yet enter into me. At length I came to the heart of God, and through that my journey lay. The moment I entered it, the great peace appeared to enter mine, and I began to understand it. Something melted in my heart, and I thought for a moment I was dying, but I found I was being born again. My heart was empty of its old selfishness, and I loved Mary tenfold — no longer in the least for my own sake, but all for her loveliness. The same moment I knew that

the heart of God was a bridge along which I was crossing the unspeakable eternal gulf that divided Mary and me. At length, somehow, I know not how, somewhere, I know not where, I was where she was. She knew nothing of my presence, turned neither face nor eye to meet me, stretched out no hand to give me the welcome of even a friend, and yet I not only knew but felt that she was mine. I wanted nothing from her; desired the presence of her loveliness only that I might know it; hung about her life as a butterfly over the flower he loves; was satisfied that she should be. I had left my self behind in the heart of God, and now I was a pure essence, fit to rejoice in the essential. But alas! my whole being was not yet subject to its best. I began to long to be able to do something for her besides—I foolishly said *beyond* loving her. Back rushed my old self in the selfish thought: Some day—will she not know—and at least—? That moment the vision vanished. I was tossed—ah! let me hope, only to the other arm of God—but I lay in torture yet again. For a man may see visions manifold, and believe them all; and yet his faith shall not save him; something more is needed—he must have that presence of God in his soul, of which the Son of Man spoke, saying: “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” God in him, he will be able to love for very love’s sake; God not in him, his best love will die into selfishness.

CHAPTER LX.

MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.

THE morning then which had thus dawned upon me, was often overclouded heavily. Yet it was the morning and not the night; and one of the strongest proofs that it was the morning, lay in this, that again I could think in verse.

One day, after an hour or two of bitterness, I wrote the following. A man’s trouble must have receded from him a little for the moment, if he describes any shape in it, so as to be able to give it form in words. I set it down with no hope of better than the vaguest sympathy. There came no music with this one.

If it be that a man and a woman
Are made for no mutual grief;
That each gives the pain to some other,
And neither can give the relief;

If thus the chain of the world
Is tied round the holy feet,
I scorn to shrink from facing
What my brothers and sisters meet.

But I cry when the wolf is tearing
At the core of my heart as now:
When I was the man to be tortured,
Why should the woman be *thou*?

I am not so ready to sink from the lofty into the abject now. If at times I yet feel that the whole creation is groaning and travailing, I know what it is for—its redemption from the dominion of its own death into that sole liberty which comes only of being filled and eternally possessed by God himself, its source and its life.

And now I found also that my heart began to be moved with a compassion towards my fellows such as I had never before experienced. I shall best convey what I mean by transcribing another little poem I wrote about the same time.

Once I sat on a crimson throne,
And I held the world in fee;
Below me I heard my brothers moan,
And I bent me down to see;—

Lovingly bent and looked on them,
But I had no inward pain;
I sat in the heart of my ruby gem,
Like a rainbow without the rain.

My throne is vanished; helpless I lie
At the foot of its broken stair;
And the sorrows of all humanity
Through my heart make a thoroughfare.

Let such things rest for a while: I have now to relate another incident—strange enough, but by no means solitary in the records of human experience. My reader will probably think that of dreams and visions there has already been more than enough: but perhaps she will kindly remember that at this time I had no outer life at all. Whatever bore to me the look of existence was within me. All my days the tendency had been to an undue predominance of thought over action, and now that the springs of action were for a time dried up, what wonder was it if thought, lording it alone, should assume a reality beyond its right? Hence the life of the day was prolonged into the night; nor was there other than a small difference in their conditions, beyond the fact that the contrast of outer things was removed in sleep; whence the shapes which the waking thought had assumed, had space and opportunity, as it were, to thicken before the mental eye until they became dreams and visions.

But concerning what I am about to relate I shall offer no theory. Such mere operation of my own thoughts may be sufficient to account for it: I would only ask — does any one know what the mere operation of his own thoughts signifies? I cannot isolate myself, especially in those moments when the individual will is less awake, from the ocean of life and thought, which not only surrounds me, but on which I am in a sense one of the floating bubbles.

I was asleep, but I thought I lay awake in bed — in the room where I still slept — that which had been my grannie's. — It was dark midnight, and the wind was howling about the gable and in the chimneys. The door opened, and some one entered. By the lamp she carried I knew my great-grandmother — just as she looked in life, only that now she walked upright and with ease. That I was dreaming is plain from the fact that I felt no surprise at seeing her.

"Wilfrid, come with me," she said, approaching the bedside. "Rise."

I obeyed like a child.

"Put your cloak on," she continued. "It is a stormy midnight, but we have not so far to go as you may think."

"I think nothing, grannie," I said. "I do not know where you want to take me."

"Come and see then, my son. You must at last learn what has been kept from you far too long."

As she spoke, she led the way down the stair, through the kitchen, and out into the dark night. I remember the wind blowing my cloak about, but I remember nothing more until I found myself in the winding hazel-walled lane, leading to Umberden Church. My grannie was leading me by one withered hand; in the other she held the lamp, over the flame of which the wind had no power. She led me into the churchyard, took the key from under the tombstone, unlocked the door of the church, put the lamp into my hand, pushed me gently in, and shut the door behind me. I walked to the vestry, and set the lamp on the desk, with a vague feeling that I had been there before, and that I had now to do something at this desk. Above it I caught sight of the row of vellum-bound books, and remembered that one of them contained something of importance to me. I took it down. The moment I opened it, I remembered with distinctness the fatal discrepancy in the entry of my grannie's marriage. I found the place: to my astonishment the date of the year was now the same as that on the

preceding page — 1747. That instant I awoke in the first gush of the sunrise.

I could not help feeling even a little excited by my dream, and the impression of it grew upon me; I wanted to see the book again. I could not rest. Something seemed constantly urging me to go and look at it. Half to get the thing out of my head, I sent Styles to fetch Lilith, and for the first time since the final assurance of my loss, mounted her. I rode for Umberden Church.

It was long after noon before I had made up my mind, and when, having tied Lilith to the gate, I entered the church, one red ray from the setting sun was nestling in the very roof. Knowing what I should find, yet wishing to see it again, I walked across to the vestry, feeling rather uncomfortable at the thought of prying thus alone into the parish register.

I could almost have persuaded myself that I was dreaming still; and in looking back, I can hardly in my mind separate the dreaming from the waking visit.

Of course I found just what I had expected — 1748, not 1747 — at the top of the page, and was about to replace the register, when the thought occurred to me, that, if the dream had been potent enough to bring me hither, it might yet mean something. I lifted the cover again. There the entry stood undeniably plain. This time, however, I noted two other little facts concerning it.

I will just remind my reader that the entry was crushed in between the date of the year and the next entry — plainly enough to the eyes; and that there was no attestation to the entries of 1747. The first additional fact — and clearly an important one — was, that in the summing up of 1748, before the signature, which stood near the bottom of the cover, a figure had been altered. Originally it stood: "In all six couple," but the six had been altered to a seven — corresponding with the actual number. This appeared proof positive that the first entry on the cover was a forged insertion. And how clumsily it had been managed!

"What could my grannie be about?" I said to myself.

It never occurred to me then that it might have been intended to *look like* a forgery.

Still I kept staring at it, as if by very force of staring I could find out something. There was not the slightest sign of erasure or alteration beyond the instance I have mentioned. Yet — and here was my second note — when I compared

the whole of the writing on the cover with the writing on the preceding page, though it seemed the same hand, it seemed to have got stiffer and shakier, as if the writer had grown old between. Finding nothing very suggestive in this, however, I fell into a dreamy mood, watching the red light, as it faded, up in the old, dark, distorted roof of the desolate church — with my hand lying on the book.

I have always had a bad habit of pulling and scratching at any knot or roughness in the paper of the book I happen to be reading; and now, almost unconsciously, with my forefinger I was pulling at an edge of parchment which projected from the joint of the cover. When I came to myself and proceeded to close the book, I found it would not shut properly because of a piece which I had curled up. Seeking to restore it to its former position, I fancied I saw a line or edge running all down the joint, and looking closer saw that these last entries in place of being upon a leaf of the book pasted to the cover in order to strengthen the binding, as I had supposed, were indeed upon a leaf which was pasted to the cover, but one not otherwise connected with the volume.

I now began to feel a more lively interest in the behaviour of my dream-grannie. Here might lie something to explain the hitherto inexplicable. I proceeded to pull the leaf gently away. It was of parchment, much thinner than the others, which were of vellum. I had withdrawn only a small portion when I saw there was writing under it. My heart began to beat faster. But I would not be rash. My old experience with parchment in the mending of my uncle's books came to my aid. If I pulled at the dry skin as I had been doing, a might not only damage it, but destroy the writing under it. I could do nothing without water, and I did not know where to find any. It would be better to ride to the village of Gastford, somewhere about two miles off, put up there, and arrange for future proceedings.

I did not know the way, and for a long time could see no one to ask. The consequence was that I made a wide round, and it was nearly dark before I reached the village. I thought it better for the present to feed Lilith, and then make the best of my way home.

The next evening — I felt so like a thief that I sought the thievish security of the night — having provided myself with what was necessary, and borrowed a horse for Styles, I set out again.

CHAPTER LXI.

THE PARISH REGISTER.

THE sky clouded as we went; it grew very dark, and the wind began to blow. It threatened a storm. I told Styles a little of what I was about — just enough to impress on him the necessity for prudence. The wind increased, and by the time we gained the copse, it was roaring, and the slender hazels bending like a field of corn.

"You will have enough to do with two horses," I said.

"I don't mind it, sir," Styles answered. "A word from me will quiet Miss Lilith; and for the other, I've known him pretty well for two years past."

I left them tolerably sheltered in the winding lane, and betook myself alone to the church. Cautiously I opened the door, and felt my way from pew to pew, for it was quite dark. I could just distinguish the windows from the walls, and nothing more. As soon as I reached the vestry, I struck a light, got down the volume, and proceeded to moisten the parchment with a wet sponge. For some time the water made little impression on the old parchment, of which but one side could be exposed to its influences, and I began to fear I should be much longer in gaining my end than I had expected. The wind roared and howled about the trembling church, which seemed too weak with age to resist such an onslaught; but when at length the skin began to grow soft and yield to my gentle efforts at removal, I became far too much absorbed in the simple operation, which had to be performed with all the gentleness and nicety of a surgical one, to heed the uproar about me. Slowly the glutinous adhesion gave way, and slowly the writing revealed itself. In mingled hope and doubt I restrained my curiosity; and as one teases oneself sometimes by dallying with a letter of the greatest interest, not until I had folded down the parchment clear of what was manifestly an entry, did I bring my candle close to it and set myself to read it. Then indeed, I found I had reason to regard with respect the dream which had brought me thither.

Right under the 1748 of the parchment, stood on the vellum cover 1747. Then followed the usual blank, and then came an entry corresponding word for word with the other entry of my great grandfather and mother's marriage. In all probability Moldwarp Hall was mine! Little as it could do for me now, I confess to a keen pang of pleasure at the thought.

Meantime, I followed out my investigation, and gradually stripped the parchment off the vellum to within a couple of inches of the bottom of the cover. The result of knowledge was as follows.

Next to the entry of the now hardly hypothetical marriage of my ancestors, stood the summing up of the marriages of 1747, with the signature of the rector. I paused, and, turning back, counted them. Including that in which alone I was interested, I found the number given correct. Next came by itself the figures 1748, and then a few more entries, followed by the usual summing up and signature of the rector. From this I turned to the leaf of parchment: there was a difference: upon the latter the sum was six, altered to seven; on the former it was five. This of course suggested further search: I soon found where the difference indicated lay.

As the entry of the marriage was, on the forged leaf, shifted up close to the forged 1748, and as the summing and signature had to be omitted, because they belonged to the end of 1747, a blank would have been left, and the writing below would have shone through and attracted attention, revealing the forgery of the whole, instead of that of the part only which was intended to look a forgery. To prevent this, an altogether fictitious entry had been made — over the summing and signature. This, with the genuine entries faithfully copied, made of the five, six, which the forger had written and then blotted into a seven, intending to expose the entry of my ancestors' marriage as a forgery, while the rest of the year's register should look genuine. It took me some little trouble to clear it all up to my own mind, but by degrees everything settled into its place, and assuming an intelligible shape in virtue of its position.

With my many speculations as to why the mechanism of the forgery had assumed this shape, I need not trouble my reader. Suffice it to say that on more than one supposition, I can account for it satisfactorily to myself. One other remark only will I make concerning it: I have no doubt it was an old forgery. One after another those immediately concerned in it had died, and there the falsehood lurked — in latent power — inoperative until my second visit to Umberden Church. But what differences might there not have been had it not started into activity for the brief space betwixt then and my sorrow?

I left the parchment still attached to the cover at the bottom, and, laying a sheet of paper between the formerly adhering

surfaces, lest they should again adhere, closed and replaced the volume. Then, looking at my watch, I found that, instead of an hour as I had supposed, I had been in the church three hours. It was nearly eleven o'clock, too late for anything further that night.

When I came out, the sky was clear and the stars were shining. The storm had blown over. Much rain had fallen. But when the wind ceased or the rain began, I had no recollection: the storm had vanished altogether from my consciousness. I found Styles where I had left him, smoking his pipe and leaning against Lilith, who — I cannot call her *which* — was feeding on the fine grass of the lane. The horse, he had picketed near. We mounted and rode home.

The next thing was to see the rector of Umberden. He lived in his other parish, and thither I rode the following day to call upon him. I found him an old gentleman, of the squire-type of rector. As soon as he heard my name, he seemed to know who I was, and at once showed himself hospitable.

I told him that I came to him as I might, were I a Catholic, to a father-confessor. This startled him a little.

"Don't tell me anything I ought not to keep secret," he said; and it gave me confidence in him at once.

"I will not," I returned. "The secret is purely my own. Whatever crime there is in it, was past punishment long before I was born; and it was committed against, not by my family. But it is rather a long story, and I hope I shall not be tedious."

He assured me of his perfect leisure.

I told him everything, from my earliest memory, which bore on the discovery I had at length made. He soon showed signs of interest; and when I had ended the tale with the facts of the preceding night, he silently rose and walked about the room. After a few moments, he said:

"And what do you mean to do, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Nothing," I answered, "so long as Sir Giles is alive. He was kind to me when I was a boy."

He came up behind me where I was seated, and laid his hand gently on my head; then, without a word, resumed his walk.

"And if you survive him, what then?"

"Then I must be guided partly by circumstances," I said.

"And what do you want of me?"

"I want you to go with me to the church, and see the book, that, in case of

anything happening to it, you may be a witness concerning its previous contents."

"I am too old to be the only witness," he said. "You ought to have several of your own age."

"I want as few to know the secret as may be," I answered.

"You should have your lawyer one of them."

"He would never leave me alone about it," I replied; "and positively I shall take no measures at present. Some day I hope to punish him for deserting me as he did."

For I had told him how Mr. Coningham had behaved.

"Revenge, Mr. Cumbermede?"

"Not a serious one. All the punishment I hope to give him is but to show him the fact of the case, and leave him to feel as he may about it."

"There can't be much harm in that."

He reflected for a few moments, and then said:

"I will tell you what will be best. We shall go and see the book together. I will make an extract of both entries, and give a description of the state of the volume, with an account of how the second entry—or more properly the *first*—came to be discovered. This I shall sign in the presence of two witnesses, who need know nothing of the contents of the paper. Of that you shall yourself take charge."

We went together to the church. The old man, after making a good many objections, was at length satisfied, and made notes for his paper. He started the question whether it would not be better to secure that volume at least under lock and key. For this I thought there was no occasion—that in fact it was safer where it was, and more certain of being forthcoming when wanted. I did suggest that the key of the church might be deposited in a place of safety; but he answered that it had been kept there ever since he came to the living forty years ago, and for how long before that, he could not tell; and so a change would attract attention, and possibly make some talk in the parish, which had better be avoided.

Before the end of the week, he had his document ready. He signed it in my presence, and in that of two of his parishioners, who as witnesses appended their names and abodes. I have it now in my possession. I shall inclose it, with my great-grandfather and mother's letters—and something besides—in the packet containing this history.

That week, Sir Giles Brotherton died.

CHAPTER LXII.

A FOOLISH TRIUMPH.

I SHOULD have now laid claim to my property, but for Mary. To turn Sir Geoffrey with his mother and sister out of it, would have caused me little compunction, for they would still be rich enough; I confess indeed it would have given me satisfaction. Nor could I say what real hurt of any kind it would occasion to Mary; and if I were writing for the public, instead of my one reader, I know how foolishly incredible it must appear that for her sake I should forego such claims. She would, however, I trust, have been able to believe it without the proofs which I intend to give her. The fact was simply this: I could not even for my own sake bear the thought of taking, in any manner or degree, a position if but apparently antagonistic to her. My enemy was her husband; he should reap the advantage of being her husband; for her sake he should for the present retain what was mine. So long as there should be no reason to fear his adopting a different policy from his father's in respect of his tenants, I felt myself at liberty to leave things as they were; for Sir Giles had been a good landlord, and I knew the son was regarded with favour in the county. Were he to turn out unjust or oppressive, however, then duty on my part would come in. But I must also, remind my reader that I had no love for affairs; that I had an income perfectly sufficient for my wants; that, both from my habits of thought and from my sufferings, my regard was upon life itself—was indeed so far from being confined to this chrysalid beginning thereof, that I had lost all interest in this world save as the porch to the house of life. And, should I ever meet her again, in any possible future of being, how much rather would I not stand before her as one who had been even Quixotic for her sake—as one who for a hair's-breadth of her interest had felt the sacrifice of a fortune a merely natural movement of his life! She would then know not merely that I was true to her, but that I had been true in what I professed to believe when I sought her favour. And if it had been a pleasure to me—call it a weakness, and I will not oppose the impeachment;—call it self-pity, and I will confess to that as having a share in it;—but, if it had been a shadowy pleasure to me to fancy I suffered for her sake, my present resolution, while it did not add the

weight of a feather to my suffering, did yet give me a similar vague satisfaction.

I must also confess to a certain satisfaction in feeling that I had power over my enemy—power of making him feel my power—power of vindicating my character against him as well, seeing one who could thus abstain from asserting his own rights could hardly have been one to invade the rights of another; but the enjoyment of this consciousness appeared to depend on my silence: if I broke that, the strength would depart from me; but while I held my peace, I held my foe in an invisible mesh. I half deluded myself into fancying that while I kept my power over him unexercised, I retained a sort of pledge for his conduct to Mary, of which I was more than doubtful; for a man with such antecedents as his, a man who had been capable of behaving as he had behaved to Charley, was less than likely to be true to his wife: he was less than likely to treat the sister as a lady, who to the brother had been a traitorous seducer.

I have now to confess a fault as well as an imprudence—punished I believe, in the results.

The behaviour of Mr. Coningham still rankled a little in my bosom. From Geoffrey I had never looked for anything but evil; of Mr. Coningham I had expected differently, and I began to meditate the revenge of holding him up to himself: I would punish him in a manner which with his confidence in his business faculty, he must feel: I would simply show him how the precipitation of selfish disappointment had led him astray, and frustrated his designs. For if he had given even a decent attention to the matter, he would have found in the forgery itself hints sufficient to suggest the desirableness of further investigation.

I had not however concluded upon anything, when one day I accidentally met him, and we had a little talk about business, for he continued to look after the rent of my field. He informed me that Sir Geoffrey Brotherton had been doing all he could to get even temporary possession of the park, as we called it; and, although I said nothing of it to Mr. Coningham, my suspicion is, that, had he succeeded, he would, at the risk of a lawsuit in which he would certainly have been cast, have ploughed it up. He told me also that Clara was in poor health; she who had looked as if no blight could ever touch her, had broken down utterly. The shadow of her sorrow was plain enough on the face of her father, and his confi-

dent manner had a little yielded, although he was the old man still. His father had died a little before Sir Giles. The new baronet had not offered him the succession.

I asked him to go with me yet once more to Umberden Church—for I wanted to show him something he had overlooked in the register—not, I said, that it would be of the slightest furtherance to his former hopes. He agreed at once, already a little ashamed perhaps of the way in which he had abandoned me. Before we parted we made an appointment to meet at the church.

We went at once to the vestry. I took down the volume, and laid it before him. He opened it, with a curious look at me first. But the moment he lifted the cover, its condition at once attracted and as instantly rivetted his attention. He gave me one glance more, in which questions and remarks and exclamations numberless lay in embryo; then turning to the book, was presently absorbed, first in reading the genuine entry, next in comparing it with the forged one.

"Right after all!" he exclaimed at length.

"In what?" I asked. "In dropping me without a word, as if I had been an impostor? In forgetting that you yourself had raised in me the hopes whose discomfiture you took as a personal injury?"

"My dear sir!" he stammered in an expostulatory tone, "you must make allowance. It was a tremendous disappointment to me."

"I cannot say I felt it quite so much myself, but at least you owe me an apology for having misled me."

"I had *not* misled you," he retorted angrily, pointing to the register.—"There!"

"You left me to find that out though. You took no further pains in the matter."

"How *did* you find it out?" he asked, clenching at a change in the tone of the conversation.

I said nothing of my dream, but I told him everything else concerning the discovery. When I had finished—

"It's all plain sailing now," he cried. "There is not an obstacle in the way. I will set the thing in motion the instant I get home.—It will be a victory worth achieving!" he added, rubbing his hands.

"Mr. Coningham, I have not the slightest intention of moving in the matter," I said.

His face fell.

"You do not mean—when you hold

them in your very hands—to throw away every advantage of birth and fortune, and be a nobody in the world?"

"Infinite advantages of the kind you mean, Mr. Coningham, could make me not one whit more than I am: they *might* make me less."

"Come, come," he expostulated; "you must not allow disappointment to upset your judgment of things."

"My judgment of things lies deeper than any disappointment I have yet had," I replied. "My uncle's teaching has at last begun to bear fruit in me."

"Your uncle was a fool!" he exclaimed.

"But for my uncle's sake, I would knock you down for daring to couple such a word with *him*."

He turned on me with a sneer. His eyes had receded in his head, and in his rage he grinned. The old ape-face, which had lurked in my memory ever since the time I first saw him, came out so plainly that I started: the child had read his face aright! the following judgment of the man had been wrong! the child's fear had not imprinted a false eidolon upon the growing brain.

"What right had you," he said, "to bring me all this way for such tomfoolery?"

"I told you it would not further your wishes.—But who brought me here for nothing first?" I added, most foolishly.

"I was myself deceived. I did not intend to deceive you."

"I know that. God forbid I should be unjust to you. But you have proved to me that your friendship was all a pretence; that your private ends were all your object. When you discovered that I could not serve those, you dropped me like a bit of glass you had taken for a diamond. Have you any right to grumble if I give you the discipline of a passing shame?"

"Mr. Cumbermede," he said, through his teeth, "you will repent this."

I gave him no answer, and he left the church in haste. Having replaced the register, I was following at my leisure, when I heard sounds that made me hurry to the door. Lilith was plunging and rearing and pulling at the bridle which I had thrown over one of the spiked bars of the gate. Another moment and she must have broken loose, or dragged the gate upon her—more likely the latter, for the bridle was a new one with broad reins—when some frightful injury would in all probability have been the consequence to herself. But a word from me quieted her,

and she stood till I came up. Every inch of her was trembling. I suspected at once, and in a moment discovered plainly that Mr. Coningham had struck her with his whip: there was a big weal on the fine skin of her hip and across her croup. She shrank like a hurt child when my hand approached the injured part, but moved neither hoof nor head.

Having patted and petted and consoled her a little, I mounted and rode after Mr. Coningham. Nor was it difficult to overtake him, for he was going a footpace. He was stooping in his saddle, and when I drew near, I saw that he was looking very pale. I did not, however, suspect that he was in pain.

"It was a cowardly thing to strike the poor dumb animal!" I cried.

"You would have struck her yourself," he answered with a curse, "if she had broken your leg."

I rode nearer. I knew well enough that she would not have kicked him if he had not struck her first; and I could see that his leg was not broken; but evidently he was in great suffering.

"I am very sorry," I said. "Can I help you?"

"Go to the devil!" he groaned.

I am ashamed to say the answer made me so angry that I spoke the truth.

"Don't suppose you deceive me," I said. "I know well enough my mare did *not* kick you before you struck her. Then she lashed out of course."

I waited for no reply, but turned and rode back to the church the door of which, in my haste, I had left open. I locked it, replaced the key, and then rode quietly home.

But as I went I began to feel that I had done wrong. No doubt, Mr. Coningham deserved it, but the law was not in my hands. No man has a right to *punish* another. Vengeance belongs to a higher region, and the vengeance of God is a very different thing from the vengeance of man. However it may be softened with the name of retribution, revenge runs into all our notions of justice; and until we love purely, so it must ever be.

All I had gained was self-rebuke, and another enemy. Having reached home, I read the Manual of Epictetus right through before I laid it down, and, if it did not teach me to love my enemies, it taught me at least to be ashamed of myself. Then I wrote to Mr. Coningham, saying I was sorry I had spoken to him as I did, and begging him to let by-gones be by-gones; assuring him that if ever I moved in the

matter of our difference, he should be the first to whom I applied for assistance.

He returned me no answer.

CHAPTER LXIII.

A COLLISION.

AND now came a dreary time of reaction. There seemed nothing left for me to do, and I felt listless and weary. Something kept urging me to get away and hide myself and I soon made up my mind to yield to the impulse and go abroad. My intention was to avoid cities, and, wandering from village to village, lay my soul bare to the healing influences of nature. As to any healing in the power of Time; I despised the old bald-pate as a quack who performed his seeming cures at the expense of the whole body. The better cures attributed to him are not his at all, but produced by the operative causes whose servant he is. A thousand holy balms require his services for their full action, but they, and not he, are the saving powers. Along with Time I ranked, and with absolute hatred shrunk from, all those means which offered to cure me by making me forget. From a child, I had a horror of forgetting: it always seemed to me like a loss of being, like a hollow scooped out of my very existence—almost like the loss of identity. At times I even shrunk from going to sleep, so much did it seem like yielding to an absolute death—a death so deep that the visible death is but a picture or type of it. If I could have been sure of dreaming, it would have been different, but in the uncertainty it seemed like consenting to nothingness. That one who thus felt should ever have been tempted to suicide, will reveal how painful if not valueless his thoughts and feelings—his conscious life—must have grown to him; and that the only thing which withheld him from it should be the fear that no death, but a more intense life might be the result, will reveal it yet more clearly. That in that sleep I might at least dream—there was the rub.

All such relief, in a word, as might come of a lowering of my life, either physically, morally, or spiritually, I hated, detested, despised. The man who finds solace for a wounded heart in self-indulgence, may indeed be *capable* of angelic virtues, but in the meantime his conduct is that of the devils who went into the swine rather than be bodiless. The man who can thus be consoled for the loss of a woman, could never have been worthy of her, possibly would not have remained true to her be-

yond the first delights of possession. The relief to which I could open my door, must be such alone as would operate through the enlarging and elevating of what I recognized as *myself*. Whatever would make me greater, so that my torture, intensified it might well be, should yet have room to dash itself hither and thither without injuring the walls of my being, would be welcome. If I might become so great that, my grief yet stinging me to agony, the infinite *I* of me should remain pure and calm, God-loving and man-cherishing, then I should be saved. God might be able to do more for me—I could not tell: I looked for no more. I would myself be such as to inclose my pain in a mighty sphere of out-spacing life, in relation to which even such sorrow as mine should be but a little thing. Such deliverance alone, I say, could I consent with myself to accept, and such alone, I believe, would God offer me—for such alone seemed worthy of him, and such alone seemed not unworthy of me.

The help that Nature could give me, I judged to be of this ennobling kind. For either Nature was nature in virtue of having been born (*nata*) of God, or she was but a phantasm of my own brain—against which supposition the nature in me protested with the agony of a tortured man. To Nature then I would go. Like the hurt child who folds himself in the skirt of his mother's velvet garment, I would fold myself in the robe of Deity.

But to give honour and gratitude where both are due, I must here confess obligation with a willing and thankful heart. The "Excursion" of Wordsworth was published ere I was born, but only since I left college had I made acquaintance with it: so long does it take for the light of a new star to reach a distant world! To this book I owe so much that to me it would alone justify the conviction that Wordsworth will never be forgotten. That he is no longer the fashion, militates nothing against his reputation. We, the old ones, hold fast by him for no sentimental reminiscence of the fashion of our youth, but simply because his humanity has come into contact with ours. The men of the new generation have their new loves and worships; it remains to be seen to whom the worthy amongst them will turn long ere the frosts of age begin to gather and the winds of the human autumn to blow. Wordsworth will recede through the gliding ages until with the greater Chaucer, and the greater Shakspeare, and the greater Milton, he is yet a

star in the constellated crown of England.

Before I was able to leave home, however, a new event occurred.

I received an anonymous letter, in a hanwriting I did not recognize. Its contents were as follows; —

“SIR,—Treachery is intended you. If you have anything worth watching, *watch it.*”

For one moment—so few were the places in which through my possessions I was vulnerable—I fancied the warning might point to Lilith, but I soon dismissed the idea. I could make no enquiries, for it had been left an hour before my return from a stroll by an unknown messenger. I could think of nothing besides but the register, and if this was what my correspondent aimed at, I had less reason to be anxious concerning it, because of the attested copy, than my informant probably knew. Still its safety was far from being a matter of indifference to me. I resolved to ride over to Umberden Church and see if it was as I had left it.

The twilight was fast thickening into darkness when I entered the gloomy building. There was light enough, however, to guide my hand to the right volume, and by carrying it to the door I was able to satisfy myself that it was as I had left it.

Thinking over the matter once more as I stood, I could not help wishing that the book were out of danger just for the present; but there was hardly a place in the bare church where it was possible to conceal it. At last I thought of one—half groped my way to the pulpit, ascended its creaking stair, lifted the cushion of the seat, and laid the book, which was thin, open in the middle, and flat on its face, under it. I then locked the door, mounted, and rode off.

It was now more than dusk. Lilith was frolicsome, and, rejoicing in the grass under her feet, broke into a quick canter along the noiseless, winding lane. Suddenly there was a great shock, and I lay senseless.

I came to myself under the stinging blows of a whip, only afterwards recognized as such however. I sprang staggering to my feet, and rushed at the dim form of an assailant, with such a sudden and I suppose unexpected assault that he fell under me. Had he not fallen I should have had little chance with him, for, as I now learned by his voice, it was Sir Geoffrey Brotherton.

“Thief! Swindler! Sneak!” he cried, making a last harmless blow at me as he fell.

All the wild beast in my nature was roused. I had no weapon—not even a whip, for Lilith never needed one. It was well, for what I might have done in the first rush of blood to my reviving brain, I dare hardly imagine. I seized him by the throat with such fury that, though far the stronger, he had no chance as he lay. I kneeled on his chest. He struggled furiously, but could not force my gripe from his throat. I soon perceived that I was strangling him, and tightened my grasp.

His efforts were already growing feebleness, when I became aware of a soft touch apparently trying to take hold of my hair. Glancing up without relaxing my hold, I saw the white head of Lilith close to mine. Was it the whiteness—was it the calmness of the creature—I cannot pretend to account for the fact, but the same instant before my mind’s eye rose the vision of one standing speechless before his accusers, bearing on his form the marks of ruthless blows. I did not then remember that just before I came out I had been gazing, as I often gazed, upon an *Ecce Homo* of Albert Dürer’s that hung in my room. Immediately my heart awoke within me. My whole being still trembling with passionate struggle and gratified hate, a rush of human pity swept across it. I took my hand from my enemy’s throat, rose, withdrew some paces, and burst into tears. I could have embraced him, but I dared not even minister to him, for the insult it would appear. He did not at once rise, and when he did, he stood for a few moments, half-unconscious, I think, staring at me. Coming to himself, he felt for and found his whip—I thought with the intention of attacking me again, but he moved towards his horse, which was quietly eating the grass now wet with dew. Gathering its bridle from around its leg, he mounted, and rode back the way he had come.

I lingered for a while utterly exhausted. I was trembling in every limb. The moon rose and began to shed her low yellow light over the hazel copse, filling the lane with brightness and shadow. Lilith, seeming in her whiteness to gather a tenfold share of the light upon herself, was now feeding as gently as if she had known nothing of the strife, and I congratulated myself that the fall had not injured her. But as she took a step forward in her feeding, I discovered to my dismay that she was quite lame. For my own part I was now feeling the ache of numerous and severe bruises. When I took Lilith by the bridle to lead her away, I found that

neither of us could manage more than two miles an hour. I was very uneasy about her. There was nothing for it however but to make the best of our way to Gastford. It was no little satisfaction to think as we hobbled along, that the accident had happened through no carelessness of mine beyond that of cantering in the dark, for I was on my own side of the road. Had Geoffrey been on his, narrow as the lane was, we might have passed without injury.

It was so late when we reached Gastford, that we had to rouse the ostler before I could get Lilith attended to. I bathed the injured leg, of which the shoulder seemed wrenched; and having fed her, but less plentifully than usual, I left her to her repose. In the morning she was considerably better, but I resolved to leave her where she was, and sending a messenger for Styles to come and attend to her, I hired a gig, and went to call on my new friend the rector of Umberden.

I told him all that had happened, and where I had left the volume. He said he would have a chest made in which to secure the whole register, and, meanwhile, would himself go to the church and bring that volume home with him. It is safe enough now, as any one may find who wishes to see it — though the old man has long passed away.

Lilith remained at Gastford a week before I judged it safe for her to come home. The injury however turned out to be a not very serious one.

Why should I write of my poor mare — but that she was once hers for whose hoped perusal I am writing this? No, there is even a better reason: I shall never, to all my eternity, forget, even if I should never see her again, which I do not for a moment believe, what she did for me that evening. Surely she deserves to appear in her own place in my story!

Of course I was exercised in my mind as to who had sent me the warning. There could be no more doubt that I had hit what it intended, and had possibly preserved the register from being once more tampered with. I could think only of one. I have never had an opportunity of inquiring, and for her sake I should never have asked the question, but I have little doubt it was Clara. Who else could have had a chance of making the discovery, and at the same time would have cared to let me know it? Also she would have cogent reason for keeping such a part in the affair a secret. Probably she had heard her father informing Geoffrey; but he might

have done so with no worse intention than had informed his previous policy.

CHAPTER LXIV.

YET ONCE.

I AM drawing my story to a close. Almost all that followed bears so exclusively upon my internal history, that I will write but one incident more of it. I have roamed the world, and reaped many harvests. In the deepest agony I have never refused the consolations of Nature or of Truth. I have never knowingly accepted any founded in falsehood, in forgetfulness, or in distraction. Let such as have no hope in God drink of what Lethe they can find; to me it is a river of Hell and altogether abominable. I could not be content even to forget my sins. There can be but one deliverance from them namely, that God and they should come together in my soul. In his presence I shall serenely face them. Without him I dare not think of them. With God a man can confront anything; without God, he is but the withered straw which the sickle of the reaper has left standing on a wintry field. But to forget them would be to cease and begin anew, which to one aware of his immortality is a horror.

If comfort profound as the ocean has not yet overtaken and unfolded me, I see how such may come — perhaps will come. It must be by the enlarging of my whole being in truth, in God, so as to give room for the storm to rage yet not destroy; for the sorrow to brood yet not kill; for the sunshine of love to return after the east wind and black frost of bitterest disappointment; for the heart to feed the uttermost tenderness while the arms go not forth to embrace; for a mighty heaven of the unknown, crowded with stars of endless possibilities, to dawn when the sun of love has vanished, and the moon of its memory is too ghastly to give any light: it is comfort such and thence that I think will one day possess me. Already has not its aurora brightened the tops of my snow-covered mountains? And if yet my valleys lie gloomy and forlorn, is not light on the loneliest peak a sure promise of the coming day?

Only once again have I looked in Mary's face. I will record the occasion, and then drop my pen.

About five years after I left home, I happened in my wanderings to be in one of my favourite Swiss valleys — high and yet sheltered. I rejoiced to be far up in the mountains yet behold the inaccessible

peaks above me — mine, though not to be trodden by foot of mine — my heart's own, though never to yield me a moment's outlook from the lofty brows; for I was never strong enough to reach one mighty summit. It was enough for me that they sent me down the glad streams from the cold bosoms of their glaciers — the offspring of the sun and the snow; that I too beheld the stars to which they were nearer than I.

One lovely morning, I had wandered a good way from the village — a place little frequented by visitors, where I had a lodging in the house of the syndic — when I was overtaken by the sudden fogs which so frequently render those upper regions dangerous. There was no path to guide me back to my temporary home, but a hundred yards or so beneath where I had been sitting, lay that which led down to one of the best known villages of the canton, where I could easily find shelter. I made haste to descend.

After a couple of hours' walking, during which the fog kept following me, as if hunting me from its lair, I at length arrived at the level of the valley, and was soon in one of those large hotels which in the summer are crowded as beehives, and in the winter forsaken as a ruin. The season for travellers was drawing to a close, and the house was full of homeward-bound guests.

For the mountains will endure but a season of intrusion. If travellers linger too long within their hospitable gates, their humour changes, and, with fierce winds and snow and bitter sleet, they will drive them forth, preserving their winter privacy for the bosom friends of their mistress, Nature. Many is the winter since those of my boyhood which I have spent amongst the Alps; and in such solitude I have ever found the negation of all solitude, the one absolute Presence. David communed with his own heart on his bed and was still — there finding God: communing with my own heart in the winter-valleys of Switzerland I found at least what made me cry out: "Surely this is the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!" I would not be supposed to fancy that God is in mountains and not in plains — that God is in the solitude and not in the city: in any region harmonious with its condition and necessities, it is easier for the heart to be still, and in its stillness to hear the still small voice.

Dinner was going on at the *table d'hôte*. It was full, but a place was found for me in a bay window. Turning to the one

side, I belonged to the great world, represented by the Germans, Americans, and English, with a Frenchman and Italian here and there, filling the long table; turning to the other, I knew myself in a temple of the Most High, so huge that it seemed empty of men. The great altar of a mighty mountain rose, massy as a world, and ethereal as a thought, into the upturned gulf of the twilight air — its snowy peak, ever as I turned to look, mounting up and up to its repose. I had been playing with my own soul, spinning it between the sun and the moon as it were, and watching now the golden and now the silvery side, as I glanced from the mountain to the table and again from the table to the mountain, when all at once I discovered that I was searching the mountain for something — I did not know what. Whether any tones had reached me, I cannot tell; — a man's mind may, even through his senses, be marvellously moved without knowing whence the influence comes; — but there I was searching the face of the mountain for something, with a want which had not begun to explain itself. From base to peak my eyes went flitting and resting and wandering again upwards. At last they reached the snowy crown, from which they fell into the infinite blue beyond. Then, suddenly, the unknown something I wanted was clear. The same moment, I turned to the table. Almost opposite was a face — pallid, with parted lips and fixed eyes — gazing at me. Then I knew those eyes had been gazing at me all the time I had been searching the face of the mountain. For one moment they met mine and rested; for one moment, I felt as if I must throw myself at her feet, and clasp them to my heart; but she turned her eyes away, and I rose and left the house.

The mist was gone, and the moon was rising. I walked up the mountain path towards my village. But long ere I reached it, the sun was rising; with his first arrow of slenderest light, the tossing waves of my spirit began to lose their white tops, and sink again towards a distant calm; and ere I saw the village from the first point of vision, I had made the following verses. They are the last I will set down.

I know that I cannot move thee
To an echo of my pain,
Or a thrill of the storming trouble
That racks my soul and brain;

That our hearts through all the ages
Shall never sound in tune;

That they meet no more in their cycles
Than the parted sun and moon.

But if ever a spirit flashes
Itself on another soul,
One day, in thy stillness, a vapour
Shall round about thee roll;

And the lifting of the vapour
Shall reveal a world of pain,
Of frosted suns, and moons that wander
Through misty mountains of rain.

Thou shalt know me for one live instant —
Thou shalt know me — and yet not love :
I would not have thee troubled,
My cold, white-feathered dove.

I would only once come near thee —
Myself, and not my form;
Then away in the distance wander,
A slow-dissolving storm.

The vision should pass in vapour,
That melt in ether again;
Only a something linger —
Not pain, but the shadow of pain.

And I should know that thy spirit
On mine one look had sent;
And glide away from thy knowledge,
And try to be half-content.

CHAPTER LXV.

CONCLUSION.

THE ebbing tide that leaves bare the shore, swells the heaps of the central sea. The tide of life ebbs from this body of mine, soon to lie on the shore of life a stranded wreck; but the murmur of the waters that break upon no strand is in my ears; to join the waters of the infinite life, mine is ebbing away.

Whatever has been his will is well — grandly well — well even for that in me which feared, and in those very respects in which it feared that it might not be well. The whole being of me past and present shall say: it is infinitely well, and I would not have it otherwise. Rather than it should not be as it is, I would go back to the world and this body of which I grew weary, and encounter yet again all that met me on my journey. Yes — final submission of my will to the All-will — I would meet it *knowing what was coming*. Lord of me, Father of Jesus Christ, will this suffice? Is my faith enough yet? I say it, not having beheld what thou hast in store — not knowing what I shall be — not even absolutely certain that thou art — confident only that, if thou be, such thou must be.

The last struggle is before me. But I

have passed already through so many valleys of death itself, where the darkness was not only palpable, but choking and stinging, that I cannot greatly fear that which holds but the shadow of death. For what men call death, is but its shadow. Death never comes near us; it lies behind the back of God; he is between it and us. If he were to turn his back upon us, the death which no imagination can shadow forth, would lap itself around us, we should be — we should not know what.

At night I lie wondering how it will feel; and, but that God will be with me, I would rather be slain suddenly, than lie still and await my change. The growing weakness, ushered in, it may be, by long agony; the alienation from things about me, while I am yet amidst them; the slow rending of the bonds which make this body a home, so that it turns half alien, while yet some bonds unsevered hold the live thing fluttering in its worm-eaten cage — but God knows me and my house, and I need not speculate or forebode. When it comes, death will prove as natural as birth. Bethink thee. Lord — nay, thou never forgettest. It is because thou thinkest and feelest that I think and feel; it is on thy deeper consciousness that mine ever floats; thou knowest my frame, and rememberest that I am dust: do with me as thou wilt. Let me take centuries to die if so thou wilt, for thou wilt be with me. Only if an hour should come when thou must seem to forsake me, watch me all the time, lest self-pity should awake, and I should cry that thou wast dealing hardly with me. For when thou hidest thy face, the world is a corpse, and I am a live soul fainting within it.

Thus far had I written, and was about to close with certain words of Job which are to me like the trumpet of the resurrection, when the news reached me that Sir Geoffrey Brotherton was dead. He leaves no children, and the property is expected to pass to a distant branch of the family. Mary will have to leave Moldwarp Hall.

I have been up to London to my friend Marston — for it is years since Mr. Coningham died. I have laid everything before him, and left the affair in his hands. He is so confident in my cause, that he offers, in case my means should fail me, to find what is necessary himself; but he is almost as confident of a speedy settlement.

And now, for the first time in my life, I am about — shall I say, to court society? At least I am going to London, about to

give and receive invitations, and cultivate the acquaintance of those whose appearance and conversation attract me.

I have not a single relative, to my knowledge, in the world, and I am free beyond question, to leave whatever property I have or may have to whomsoever I please.

My design is this: if I succeed in my suit, I will offer Moldwarp to Mary for her lifetime. She is greatly beloved in the county, and has done much for the labourers, nor upon her own lands only. If she had the full power she would do yet better. But of course it is very doubtful whether she will accept it. Should she decline it, I shall try to manage it myself — leaving it to her, with reversion to the man, whoever he may be, whom I shall choose to succeed her.

What sort of man I shall endeavour to find, I think my reader will understand. I will not describe him, beyond saying that he must above all things be just, generous, and free from the petty prejudices of the country gentleman. He must understand that property involves service to every human soul that lives or labours upon it — the service of the elder brother to his less burdened yet more enduring and more helpless brothers and sisters; that for the lives of all such he has in his degree to render account. For surely God never meant to uplift any man *at the expense* of his fellows; but to uplift him that he might be strong to minister, as a wise friend and ruler, to their highest and best needs — first of all by giving them the justice which will be recognized as such by him before whom a man is his brother's keeper, and becomes a Cain in denying it.

Least Lady Brotherton, however, should like to have something to give away, I leave my former will as it was. It is in Marston's hands.

Would I marry her now, if I might? I cannot tell. The thought rouses no passionate flood within me. Mighty spaces of endless possibility and endless result open before me. Death is knocking at my door. —

No — no; I will be honest, and lay it to no half reasons, however wise. — I would rather meet her then first, when she is clothed in that new garment called by St. Paul the spiritual body. That, Geoffrey has never touched; over that he has no claim.

But if the loveliness of her character should have purified his, and drawn and bound his soul to hers?

Father, fold me in thyself. The storm so long still, awakes; once more it flutters its fierce pinions. Let it not swing itself aloft in the air of my spirit. I dare not think, not merely lest thought should kindle into agony, but lest I should fail to rejoice over the lost and found. But my heart is in thy hand. Need I school myself to bow to an imagined decree of thine? Is it not enough that, when I shall know a thing for thy will, I shall then be able to say: Thy will be done? It is not enough; I need more. School thou my heart so to love thy will, that in all calmness I leave to think what may or may not be its choice, and rest in its holy self.

She has sent for me. I go to her. I will not think beforehand what I shall say.

Something within tells me that a word from her would explain all that sometimes even now seems so inexplicable as hers. Will she speak that word? Shall I pray her for that word? I know nothing. The pure Will be done!

THE OPEN POLAR SEA. — It may be remembered by those who interest themselves in the progress of geographical discovery that the more recent explorations of the Arctic region were called into life by a scheme conceived by Captain Sherard Osborn, six years ago, for penetrating to the North Pole. The route selected was that by Baffin Bay and Smith Sound. Immediately afterwards, Dr. Petermann of Gotha laid before the English Geographical Society a project which recommended a northward course in the direction which continues the warm Gulf Stream

drift between Greenland and Novaia Zemlia. Whilst these plans were still under discussion here, a German National Expedition under Captain Koldewey, followed by several private ventures, sought a way to the Pole in the course recommended by Dr. Petermann. The commanders of some of these expeditions, however, judging from their experiences, did not think that the most practicable route had been chosen for their object, and notably Captain Koldewey, who was unable to pass the icy barriers of this region, became a convert to Captain Osborn's

plan. The news received from Payer and Weyprecht (see *Academy*, vol. ii. p. 458) on the return of their vessel to Tromsø is a triumph for Dr. Petermann, since it tells that in following precisely the course indicated they were able to pass through the outer belt of pack ice, and to reach an open sea between the north of Spitzbergen and Novaia Zemlia, above the 78th parallel and extending from 42° E. longitude probably to join the Polynia of the Siberian seas. It does not follow from this that a properly organized expedition taking the English geographer's route would not be equally successful in an "open" year: the American attempt by Captain Hall will doubtless do much to settle this point.

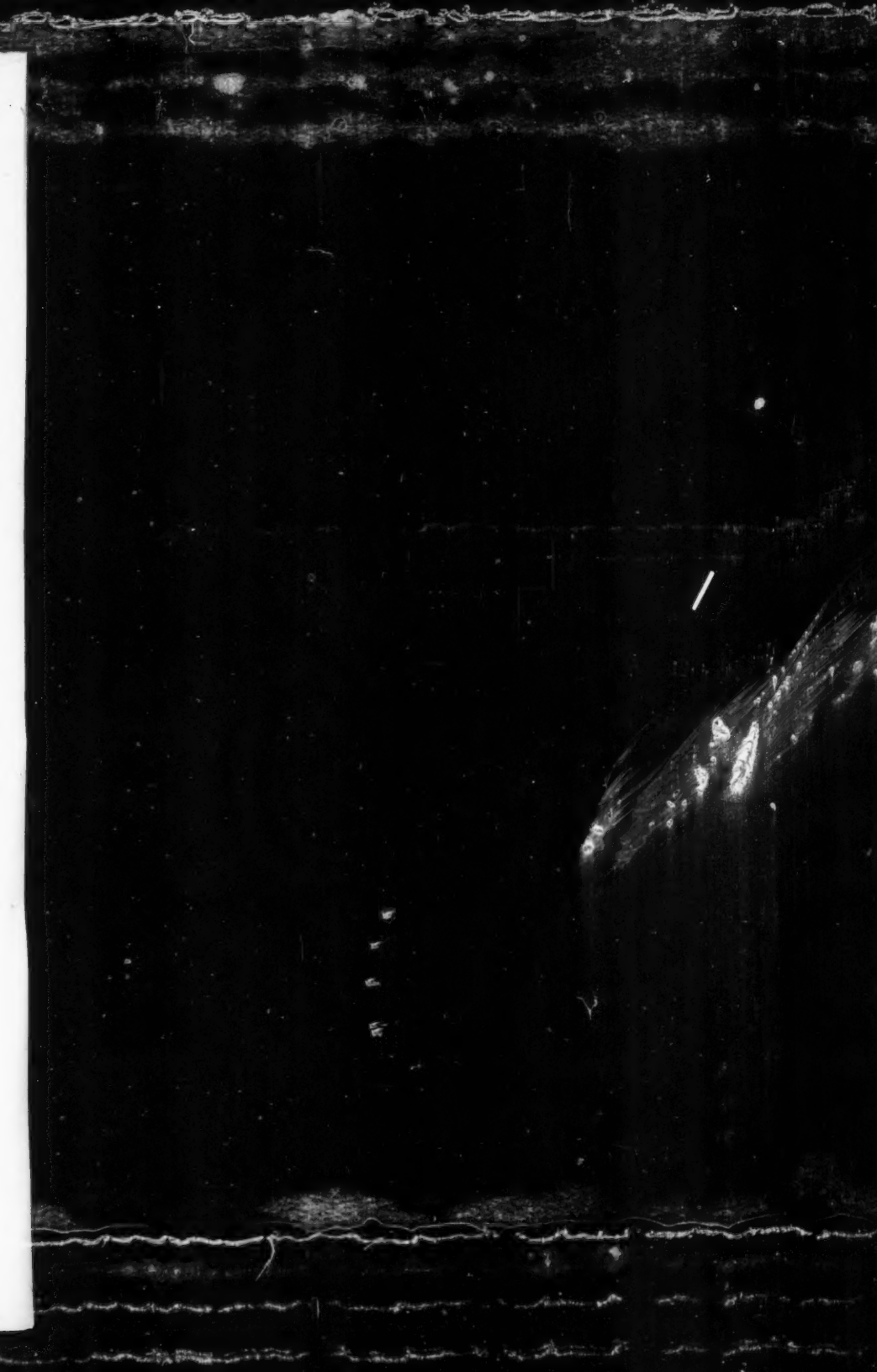
DINING WITH A MANDARIN.—When an entertainment is about to be given by a Mandarin, he sends three invitations to all those whom he wishes to partake of it—one on each of the two days preceding, and one immediately before it. These are generally received by the invited with much self-abasement and ceremony, and unless it is owing to the most pressing and important circumstances, an invitation is never refused. When the guests arrive, they are received by the master of the house with certain laid-down ceremonies and prescribed speeches. Pointing to a chair with a profound reverence, he wipes it with his robe, and generally commences the conversation by expressing his delight at the great and unmerited honour the other has conferred upon his unworthy house by adorning it with his sublime presence, and earnestly hopes that his never-to-be-sufficiently-honoured wife and most beautiful children are well in health; to which the guest will respond, that words fail to express his gratitude at being spared to bring his vile person into that most magnificent abode, and encounter the lightning glance of his lord: his unworthy wife and miserable offspring have but preserved life to be assured of his lord's health being all that they, his miserable slaves, could wish it to be; and so on. While these little amenities are being exchanged, the other guests walk about the room, admiring its furniture and adornments with all the high-flown eulogium which the language of the Flowery Land is so capable of expressing. To omit to do this would be a mark of the greatest ill-breeding. It may be imagined, that as all the compliments above specified (and a great many more) have to be paid to each guest, and that one person left out, or one necessary speech omitted, would be a culpable piece of rudeness, some little time is taken up before the way is led into the dining-hall. However, all ceremony and speechifying must at length have an end, and at last the guests are seated. The scene is a striking one: the walls are covered with native inscriptions, sometimes handsomely gilt, and adorned with banners and worked tapestry. When the Mandarin is of the Royal dynasty,

the hangings are of yellow silk emblazoned with dragons of such fierce and hideous aspects, that, if the one St. George encountered was anything like them, the saint must have had a hard time of it. The blue-silk robes and white-satin boots of the guests form a strong contrast of colour to the surroundings, while the myriads of Chinese lanterns suspended from the ceiling throw an ample but subdued light upon a really very picturesque scene. The table, which is generally of a horse-shoe form (in the centre of which a play is sometimes acted during dinner), is covered with little saucers piled one upon the other as we see plates in eating-houses at home; some are uncovered, and contain sea-slugs, ginger, cumquats (a sort of small orange), and pickles and preserves of all sorts and descriptions. The first course is generally shark's-fin and bird's-nest soup, this latter much-vaunted delicacy appearing, at least to European notions, more like a solution of glue and lime-wash than anything else. To these succeed roasted crabs, and boiled and stewed mandarin fish, resembling in appearance a large yellow carp: the flesh of this (if it can be so described) is really very good, and would be palatable were it not served up with a sweet acrid sauce, which gives it a flavour that one would imagine oysters to have were they soaked in treacle and alum. Pork, roasted, stewed, and boiled, forms a staple portion of the repast, with wild-fowl stuffed in a manner which must have been borrowed from the supper after the manner of the ancient Romans, described in "Peregrine Pickle;" and very rarely, stewed mutton. The vegetable world is represented by yams, bringalls, and sweet potatoes; and huge dishes of the inevitable curry fill up what few interstices there may remain in the corporalities of the guests, and conclude the more solid portion of the entertainment. — *Belgravia*.

THE FAIR AT NOVGOROD.—Far and wide over the plain below extended long lines of booths glittering in the morning sun, horses and waggons rattling ceaselessly to and fro, vast piles of merchandise lying heaped on every side, and a multitude whom no man can number, picturesque in every variety of dress and feature, eddying unrestingly through the countless channels of the timber Archipelago—a spectacle at which Faithful shakes his head in sorrowful foreboding, and Christian clutches with a firmer grasp the good sword that vanquished Apollon. From the first glimpse of this great gathering one gets little except an overwhelming idea of its size and numbers; for, in truth, it is not so much the influx of a large body of strangers as the springing up of a new city by sudden enchantment, in the very centre of the old one. In and around this third-rate provincial town there are gathered, during the six weeks of the great commercial Parliament, nearly half a million of men, or a larger population than that of

Moscow; and a mighty aggregate of human forces, from whatever cause assembled, has always a kind of grandeur collectively, no matter how insignificant may be the individual items. But, as you pursue your survey, the great assemblage develops another striking feature, viz., the extraordinary diversity of the elements which compose it. In Moscow, in Kazan, in Nijni itself, you may any day see three, or four, or half a dozen different types; but here all the principal races of European Asia are represented again and again. There are the portly German, the hard-faced Dutchman the dapper Frenchman, the fresh-coloured Swede; the lumpish Czech, with his cracked, tuneless voice; the handsome, knavish, dark-eyed Greek, ever on the look-out for a bargain, with all the unstudied grace and intense vitality of his indomitable race betraying itself in every line of his lithe, sinewy frame; the hook-nosed Jew, with his sharp, suspicious look (taught him by centuries of oppression) in his keen black eyes; the bluff Anglo-Saxon from the roaring streets of the Thames; and the beetle-browed Muscovite from the voiceless steppes of the Volga. There, too, appear the spare, high-cheeked Armenian; and the brown, bullet-headed Tartar; and the square, shaggy Kirghiz; and the squat, yellow-haired Finn. There grins the gnome-like Bashkir, hirsute and untamable as the four-footed ancestor ascribed to him by tradition. There, side by side, tower the stately Bokhariot and the tall, wiry Cossack, gaunt and tireless as the wolves of their native deserts. The gipsy visage of the Sarth faces the sleek,

tiger-like beauty of the Circassian; and the sturdy Esthonian from the factories of Narva, jostles the yellow, narrow-eyed Chinese from the slopes of the Altai Mountains. And it is not only the vast variety of race which strikes one, but also the distant out-of-the-way regions from which they have come. One's right hand touches the dress of a man from the extreme east of Asia, one's left shoulder jostles a man from the extreme west of Europe. The whole fair is one vast geographical abridgment, in which the four points of the compass join hands with bewildering suddenness. The very world itself appears small and confined in the midst of this great Witenagemot of the remote and the impossible. One feels as if one had traversed the whole globe in a few seconds, like Mahomet in his voyage to the seventh heaven; and this feeling is enhanced by the aspect which lies strewn on every side: costly furs from the depths of Siberian forests, chests of tea from swarming Chinese cities, hardware from Birmingham and Sheffield, wine from the Gironne, and fruit from the Danube, soft carpets from Samarcand, and rich stuffs and silks from Khodjent, around which swarm grimy Tartars and greasy Cossacks, staring, fingering, criticizing, admiring; a tableau such as one might have seen, many a time and oft, in the stormy days when Alaric's Goths and Genseric's Vandals, in the rude trappings of their native barbarism, rifled with unsparing hand the bazars of Imperial Rome. — *Churchman's Shilling Magazine.*





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